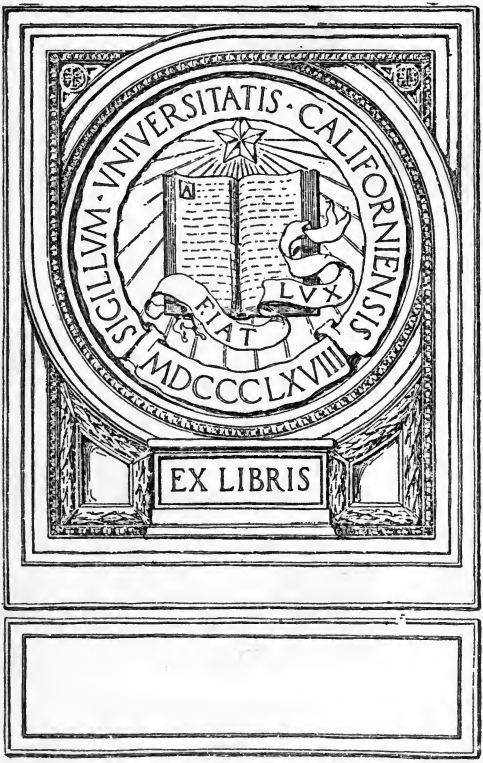
A SHORT HISTORY OF S.P.C.K.

W. K. LOWTHER CLARKE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A SHORT HISTORY OF S.P.C.K.

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BY

W. K. LOWTHER CLARKE, B.D.

EDITORIAL SECRETARY OF THE SOCIETY

LONDON

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE object of this little book is to give a brief sketch of the past history and present work of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, for the benefit of those who would like to know something about it, but, for want either of time or inclination, do not care to read a long book on the subject. The existence of the official History of the Society, published in 1898 to mark its second centenary, absolves me from the duty of attempting any measure of completeness. References seemed unnecessary in so slight a sketch as this, which, except for a few details drawn from unprinted records, is a compilation from the above-mentioned History, well-known books on the Church life of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and the Monthly and Annual Reports of the Society.

The book was written during 1918, at a time when the Society was feeling the strain of the Great War severely. It has been twice evicted from its premises by the Government. The scarcity of paper has handicapped the publishing department in many directions. The Committee thought it right to suggest to the Organising Secretaries to put themselves at the disposal of the Church authorities, in order that they might render to Church and nation whatever service seems best suited to their capacities. The Society's income has suffered considerably as a result of war conditions, and so I have written this little book in the hope that those into whose hands it falls may be led to take an interest in this, the oldest of our Church organisations.

The reader may perhaps wonder whether, if this was my object, I have gone the right way to work. Is not the tone in places more critical than is wise in such a book?

I think not. In a short time I have learned to love the Society, and identify myself wholly with its successes and aspirations, its failures and disappointments. But I am convinced that, when one presents the cause of any organisation belonging to the Church of Him Who is the Truth, candour and the avoidance of conventional smooth things is the only possible method. Nor is uncritical self-praise likely to win the approval of thoughtful Churchpeople.

In support of my attitude let me quote some words written a century ago by one of the best friends the Society ever had, Christopher Wordsworth, Master of Trinity, and brother of the poet: "The habit of our Society has been to act, and not to talk; these professions are beneath its dignity. Its principles are well known, its character does not need these ostentatious testimonies. Pray let us continue, as much as may be, grave and sober, and catch as little as is possible of the character of this pragmatical, factious, and professive age."

It remains to be said that the Committee have seen the book in proof and sanctioned its publication. They have let me write it in my own way, and the views I have expressed must not be taken as being necessarily those of the Society.

November, 1918.

PREFACE BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

I HAVE year after year been puzzled how best to conquer the strange apathy Churchmen show towards a Society to which the whole Church has for more than two centuries owed a debt which is incalculable. I believe that this little book may help to bring about the victory. It is clear and it is readable. The handiwork of one who knows all the facts, it tells in plain terms a remarkable story and gives a candid statement of existing needs. I commend it with confidence. God speed the endeavour it makes, by what it tells about past and present, to open the way for "greater things than these."

RANDALL CANTAUR.

November, 1918.

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PAST

A SHORT HISTORY OF S.P.C.K.

CHAPTER I

ENGLAND AT THE END OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

ONE feature of the Seventeenth Century, as we look back on it from this distance, seems to dwarf all others—namely, the Wars of Religion. The great European struggles between the Catholic and Protestant powers which culminated in the Thirty Years War were perhaps the bitterest that have ever been fought, the present war not excepted. The effect on Germany was disastrous. The country was left in a state of utter exhaustion; large parts of it had become desolate, and the population was reduced by at least one-half. Our own land was more fortunate. No foreign invader landed on our shores, and the life of the mass of the people was comparatively little affected by the Civil War between Royalist and Puritan. We must not lose sight of the connection between England and the Continent; our Civil War was in some respects a part of the great European struggle. It had constitutional and economic aspects of great importance, but the strongest motive on the Puritan side was the dread of the French sympathies of the Stuarts resulting in a re-establishment of Roman Catholic jurisdiction.

When Charles II. returned in 1660, the old regime was restored, but in part only. The flood had subsided, but some features of the landscape were permanently altered. The beginning of modern England is generally dated from the coming of the Prince of Orange in 1688, but the main features of the later period can already be discerned in the reign of Charles II.

A minor campaign may leave a nation pretty much where it was, but a long-drawn-out struggle, with the consequent strain upon the material and spiritual resources of the community, must bring changes. The bow which has been taut so long relaxes, and reaction is inevitable. As was only to be expected after the Wars of Religion, great religious changes took place in the latter half of the seventeenth century both on the Continent and in England. The change most familiar to English readers is the reaction from the strictness of Puritanism to the licence of Charles II.'s reign. The Court was corrupt enough, the stage even worse, mirroring an unreal world in which vice was always triumphant. No doubt things were better in the provinces, and remote country districts lived their life quite unaffected by the society and politics of London, but everywhere good influences were sadly weakened. The Church of England was popular, but, in spite of shining examples of individual holiness, the ordered tradition of the Christian life for which the Church stands had been shattered during the Puritan interlude. The Church of the Restoration possessed many great men, but the rank and file of the clergy were miserably poor and ill equipped for their work. The Dissenters were cowed by the repressive legislation of the Royalist Parliament, and retired into obscurity for at least a generation, so far as influence on the national life was concerned.

In the realm of thought a rationalistic temper had been growing up during the Commonwealth period. When it was free to express itself at the Restoration, it soon became a powerful force, especially among the ruling class, and what was afterwards recognised as the characteristic eighteenth-century spirit began to be manifested. A load of oppression seemed to be removed as the endless discussions about problems of dogma and Biblical interpretation ceased to interest the generality of men. People turned eagerly to philosophy and the beginnings of modern scientific research. Economic and industrial questions came into prominence. The era of the Royal Society, imperial expansion and a national debt, was inaugurated.

Pietism—the word is used in the narrower sense—is always a force in bad times. Small groups of Christians, despairing of

the Republic, come together to help one another in escaping from the wrath to come. During the Commonwealth Puritan pietism had a strongly fanatic tinge; the Fifth Monarchy men, Muggletonians, and similar sects, may be mentioned. For Churchmen, however, combination was impossible, and they were obliged to wait in silence and isolation for better times. But as the reign of Charles II. went on, the Church began to settle down under the new conditions and show a more active front against evil. The pendulum swung, and a reaction towards good succeeded the original reaction towards licence. Developments were favoured by the attitude of the State, which, though still greatly interested in religion as compared with to-day, was becoming more secular. So it was possible for the Church to develop its characteristic institutions without being repressed by the heavy hand of the State. Church pietism wore a practical, sensible English dress and manifested itself chiefly in the Religious Societies. As we have seen, reaction from the corruption that was so rife was one cause, but we may also see in these societies the old English spirit of association and self-government, so drastically suppressed at the Reformation when the gilds were destroyed, reappearing in a new form suited to the changed circumstances of the age.

We must now look more closely at these societies, since we are approaching the actual origin of the S.P.C.K. About 1678 numbers of young men in London began to associate with the purpose of helping one another to lead a holy life according to the mind of the Church. The movement was of lay origin, but thoroughly loyal to Church order; the members at once put themselves under the direction of their parish clergyman. A certain Dr. Horneck was the father of the movement, and a set of rules drawn up by him is extant. Frequent devotional meetings were held, at which the Church prayers were said and a theological book read. Discussion about the spiritual life was allowed, but no controversial theology. A clergyman was to preside and settle who was to be admitted; to him also cases of conscience were referred. Meetings were held once a week in the evening; frequent Communion, daily self-examination, and other devotional exercises, were recommended. Among the practical activities of the members

were the visiting of the sick and of prisoners, the relief of poor people, and the education of their children.

Less in accordance with modern ideas were the Societies for the Reformation of Manners, which began about 1691. Their aim was the enforcement of the existing laws against vice. They were not strictly Church societies, though composed mainly of Churchmen.

The S.P.C.K. clearly owed its inspiration to the societies just mentioned. Its constitution was predominantly lay, four laymen and one clergyman being the original members, and in this respect it resembled the Religious Societies. It was not, however, connected with any parish church, and its non-parochial character may have been suggested by the Societies for the Reformation of Manners. We may regard it as a Society for the Reformation of Manners by spiritual means, and the founders, impressed by the terrible lack of knowledge, by which the people were destroyed, defined their object as the Promoting of Christian *Knowledge*. Add to this the far-sighted vision of Dr. Bray, to whom the needs of Englishmen overseas and the unevangelised heathen world made so strong an appeal, and we have the new Society.

It is one of the tragedies of English Church history that the Religious Societies, which seemed in a fair way to anticipate the Church revival of the nineteenth century, died a natural death before long. The soporific influences of the eighteenth century were too strong for them. "When George in pudding-time came o'er, and moderate men looked big," there was no place for enthusiasm. The deliberate policy of Walpole was to preserve the Hanoverian succession by stilling every controversial issue which might bring back the old religious disputes and thereby encourage Jacobite intrigues. Where there is life, controversy is inevitable, and Walpole's policy was disastrous for the Church. Convocation was silenced, and Whig Bishops were appointed who were completely out of sympathy with the better side of Church life. The secession of the Non-Jurors, the salt of the Church, was a heavy blow. The societies lingered on for a generation or so, but by 1750 they had practically disappeared. But in God's providence they had accomplished much. In 1702 the Rev. Samuel Wesley, of Epworth in Lincolnshire, established a small society, inspired

thereto by one of the earliest publications of S.P.C.K. The father's example was followed some years later at Oxford by his sons John and Charles, who thus began one of the world's great religious movements. That the institutions of the world-wide Wesleyan Society should have been to some extent moulded after the pattern of the Religious Societies is no small achievement to be placed to their credit. Though less significant historically, it was none the less a weighty contribution to the religious life of the world when they inspired the foundation of the two great Church Societies which have lasted to our own day. The Religious Societies served their generation and passed away, but the little band which met for the first time on March 8, 1698, had within it something which God did not allow to die. Through the labours of S.P.C.K. and its greater offshoot S.P.G., a blessing has come to lands and peoples which were unknown to the Englishmen of the seventeenth century.

CHAPTER II

EARLY DAYS

On March 8, 1698, or, in accordance with modern reckoning, 1699 (New Year's Day at that period being on March 25), the five original members met in London at the house of one of their number, Mr. Justice Hooke. Four were laymen—Lord Guilford, Colonel Colchester of Westbury-on-Severn, Sir Humphrey Mackworth of the Middle Temple, and Mr. Justice Hooke; the fifth was a clergyman, the famous Dr. Bray.

With all respect to the laymen, who were good men and true, though Dean Swift did speak of Lord Guilford as "a mighty silly fellow," the initiative clearly came from the parson. Dr. Bray was one of the greatest men produced by our Church. His name is perpetuated by the Theological Libraries which bear his name, and his memory will ever be fresh in the hearts of supporters of S.P.G. and S.P.C.K., each of which reveres him as founder.

Dr. Bray's original scheme, which is in the possession of Sion College Library, is styled "A General Plan of the Constitution of a Protestant Congregation or Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge." It is divided into two parts: "First. As to the Plantations abroad. . . . Secondly. As to the Propagation of Christian Knowledge at home." He speaks of the proposed Society as a "Congregation *pro Propaganda Fide*." At an early meeting of the Society he submitted a memorandum in which he described what had been done already towards the fulfilment of the first part of the design, and developed the ideas sketched in his original draft.

The first meeting of the Society was thoroughly business-like, and compares favourably with the inaugural meeting of many a charitable organisation in the twentieth century. The

Society was the Committee, and got to work at once, as the following minutes show :

8 *March*, 1698-9

"*Present:* The Right Hon^ble^ the Lord Guilford, S^r^ Humphrey Mackworth, Mr. Justice Hook, Dr. Bray, Col. Colchester.

"1. Resolv'd that Col. Colchester and Dr. Bray go and discourse George Keith in order to be satisfyed what progress he has hitherto made towards the instruction and conversion of Quakers, and to know what he designs to attempt further under the guidance of God's Providence and assistance, in order to redeem that misguided people to the knowledge and belief of Christ, and that they report the same to the Society to-morrow morning.

"2. Resolv'd that we consider to-morrow morning how to further and promote that good Design of erecting Catecheticall Schools in each parish in and about London, and that Col. Colchester and Dr. Bray give their thoughts how it may be done.

"3. Resolv'd that the Right Hon^ble^ the Lord Guilford be desired to speak to the Archbishop that care may be taken that a clause be provided in the Bill for imploying the poor, to have the Children taught to read and be instructed in the Church Catechism.

"4. Resolv'd that Dr. Bray be desired, as soon as conveniently he can, to lay before this Society his Scheme for Promoting Religion in the Plantations, and his Accompts of Benefactions and Disbursements towards the same."

The whole proceedings of the Society up to June 1, 1704, have been printed in full in a book edited by Canon McClure, entitled *A Chapter in English Church History: S.P.C.K. Minutes and Correspondence, 1698-1704* (London, 1888), which should be consulted by all who wish to know what the Church of England was like at that time. Though Convocation had not yet been silenced, the Church was largely inarticulate, and apart from the opportunities given by S.P.C.K. had few means of expressing itself. The best way of discovering what the average country clergyman is thinking about to-day

is to turn to the correspondence columns of the Church papers. The nearest approach to this source of information for the years 1698-1704 is the collection of letters from the Society's correspondents printed at the end of Canon McClure's book. If some passages cause a smile, the majority of the letters reveal an enthusiasm for the cause of religion and the fulfilment of ministerial duty which would be a credit to the Church in any age. The clergy were ready to follow a vigorous and statesmanlike lead such as the new Society was prepared to give, and welcomed the venture with enthusiasm.

The actual membership increased but slowly. Only those seem to have been elected who were likely to prove a real help to the deliberations by their personal qualifications. Robert Nelson, the famous Non-Juror, was one of the first to be admitted. The Bishop of Gloucester (Fowler) was the first episcopal member, joining in July, 1699. The two Archbishops (Tenison and Sharp) soon followed, and a number of other Bishops, including Thomas Wilson of Sodor and Man.

An integral part of the scheme was the appointment of corresponding members, in the provinces and English settlements overseas, who were to report to headquarters in London on the state of religion in their respective districts and the best methods of attaining the Society's objects. The ideal was to have one or more clergymen in each county and one in each large town who would "erect Societies of the same nature with this throughout the Kingdom"; a few lay correspondents were, however, appointed. At Epworth Samuel Wesley established a local society, after the model of those described in Dr. Woodward's book, *An Account of the Rise and Progress of the Religious Societies in the City of London*, which the S.P.C.K. had sent him. In a letter of June 16, 1701, he speaks of it as "a small Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge." In other parts of the country what we should now call clerical societies were formed. Thus, in Buckinghamshire the clergy of one district met in one another's houses every six weeks to plan the extension of education, reporting their progress to headquarters. Model rules for Charity Schools were circulated, but nothing of this kind was attempted in connection with the local Societies, which developed their independent organisation in accordance with their own needs.

Friendly relations were also established with the leaders of the Reformed Churches on the Continent; Osterwald of Neufchâtel, Professor Francke of Halle, and others, were appointed correspondents, and took their duties very seriously, writing long and careful letters.

The two great objects of the Society, missions overseas and religious education at home, are of such importance that a separate chapter is devoted to each. The origins of the third great activity, that of publishing, may be briefly described here.

Arrangements were made for the first publication when the Society was but three days old. On March 10, the second meeting, the following resolutions were passed:

> "That this Society will endeavour to disperse Mr. Keith's Narrative and Catechism up and downe the Kingdome among the Quakers for their better conviction and instruction. . . .
>
> "That Dr. Bray do lay before the Society an estimate of the printing Mr. Keith's Narrative and Catechism."

On March 20 the expenditure of £12 was sanctioned for the purpose, the money being subscribed on the spot by the lay members. It is not clear how far this first venture realised the expectations of the promoters. On July 13 "Mr. Keith reported his travails and good success in converting the Quakers," but on September 15 he "gave an account to the Society of the violent oppositions of the Quakers in shutting the door of their meetings against him, and desired the advice of the Society how he shall behave himself thereupon."

The first real book was *A Discourse on the Baptismall Covenant*, by Dr. Bray. This had been printed in 1697 at the author's expense. On November 23, 1699, six hundred copies were bought from him, bound in sheep's leather, at a shilling a copy, and the price was fixed at eighteen pence, the profits being earmarked for the formation of lending libraries. This was the first trading operation. Though the Society cannot rival the hoary antiquity of the Oxford University Press, it has played an honourable part in the records of British publishing, having been at work in this field for more than two centuries.

Other books and tracts followed in quick succession, some specially written, but most being already existing publications which were approved as suitable for the Society's purpose. The systematic distribution of Bibles and Prayer Books was not undertaken until 1705. Only in 1750 did the Society begin to put its imprint on some of its publications.

The distribution of literature when produced was as important as the actual publication, especially as the present channels of the book-distributing trade were not in existence. Confronted with this problem, the Society evolved a system of free grants and local agencies, which has lasted in a modified form down to the present day, though naturally much of its importance has been lost under changed conditions. When the Society was founded, Dr. Bray had already made considerable progress with his scheme for providing libraries, according to his "General Plan," "throughout the plantations . . . in the smaller parishes of this Kingdom, to enable the Clergy to perform their duty of catechising according to the 39th Canon," and equipping "the market towns with Lending Libraries." The Society took over this part of the scheme, and, as we have seen, earmarked the profits of books for its benefit.

But the sheet-anchor of the S.P.C.K. system of book-distribution was the annual packet. This was a selection of such literature, no matter by whom published, as it was thought desirable the Clergy should read in order that they might co-operate intelligently with the Central Society. For some years it was sent gratis to all corresponding members, though later they were invited to contribute towards the cost.

Religious literature was given away widely to all classes of people. The following extracts from the minutes will illustrate the methods adopted :

"*March* 10, 1700-1.—Ordered that 800 of the Kind Cautions against Swearing be delivered to Major Herne, in order to be distributed among the Hackney Coachmen."

"*April* 28, 1701.—Ordered that 1000 more of the Papers against Swearing be sent and distributed among the Seamen."

November 25, 1701.—5000 "Soldiers' Monitors" were granted to the army of the Earl (afterwards Duke) of Marlborough in Flanders.

"*October* 31, 1700.—Ordered that Fifty of the Consolatory Letters to Slaves be delivered to Dr. Evans in order to send them to the said (English) Captives in the Island of Ceylon."

March 11, 1702-3.—A grant of tracts was made to the French refugees in London.

"*August* 13, 1702.—A motion being made for some Practical Books to be distributed amongst the Sick and Wounded in the Hospitals in and about London, Ord[d] that Mr. Hodges be desired to lay a specimen of such Books, etc., as he shall think proper, before this Society at next Meeting, in order to be distributed amongst them.

"Mr. Hodges also moved that some of this Society's Books and Papers may be distributed amongst the Poor Children in the Workhouse in Bishopsgate Street."

As an example of the continuity of English life and the manner in which the present Committee, unconsciously perhaps, follows the lines laid down by the original Committee we may mention that during the past year (1918) various grants of books have been made for libraries; a packet of literature has been sent to all subscribers of two guineas and upwards who have asked to receive it; tracts were distributed in large quantities; very large consignments of books were sent to sailors and soldiers; several thousand prayer and hymn books to English prisoners in Germany; a special effort was made for the benefit of war refugees in the shape of the production and free gift of Serbian Prayer Books for the exiled Serbs; nearly every day of the year saw a grant of literature for the wounded soldiers; and a special remembrance of workhouse children was made at Christmas-time by presents of picture-books.

As early as December 30, 1700, the Society was discussing plans for helping the Churches of the East, a foreshadowing of the policy which led it two centuries later to finance for many years the Archbishop's Mission to the Assyrian Christians. And on June 2, 1701, a selection was made of tracts to be translated into Dutch, a modest beginning of that Foreign Translation work which was afterwards to assume such proportions.

Before we leave these early minutes, a few extracts may

interest the reader, throwing, as they do, a vivid light upon the ideas of the age.

We find the Society, far in front of public opinion, congratulating Sir John Philipps, one of their number, "for the Noble and Christian Example he has shown in refusing a Challenge after the Highest Provocation Imaginable." Elaborate plans were made for the reformation of prisons, which unfortunately led to nothing. A record was ordered to be kept of all societies in England and Wales existing for religion and reformation. "Hereby we know where to enquire for our friends when we have occasion for them." Mr. Downing, the Society's printer, had printed Madame Guyon's *Method of Prayer*, which was thought to be dangerous: "Order'd that Mr. Downing be certified that if he prints any more such like Books he shall print no more for the Society." At the next meeting Mr. Downing made an abject apology, promising to "call in all unsold copies and make waste paper of them." On December 16, 1703, the Committee showed that they were no respecters of persons by ordering some paragraphs from Tillotson's Sermons, against Plays, to be "printed and dispersed among Ladies of Quality."

Finally, as a sign of the prestige gained by S.P.C.K. in the first few years of its life, the minute of April 20, 1704, is significant. Apparently the tutors of Peter the Great's son had asked, through the English Chaplain at Berlin, for some English books to be recommended. "The Minute about recommending some good Books to the Preceptors of the Czar's Son, being taken into Consideration, the Society pitch'd upon The Whole Duty of Man, and Dr. Henry More's Ethics, till they consider farther."

CHAPTER III

FOREIGN MISSIONS

INSTRUCTED Christians to-day are agreed that it is the primary duty of the Church to proclaim the good news of Christ and His Kingdom to those who have not yet heard it, though there are considerable differences in the extent to which they act upon their theoretical convictions. So one realises with difficulty the state of mind, common in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which denied the existence of a missionary obligation and maintained that the command to preach the gospel to all nations applied only to the Apostolic Church. This lethargy was more pronounced among Anglicans and the Protestants of the Continent than in the Roman Catholic Church. Broadly speaking, the Counter-Reformation was a missionary force, the Reformation was not. The Jesuits, Dominicans, and other Orders, had already a noble record of heroic work in India, China, and elsewhere, at a time when the Churches of Northern Europe were quite indifferent to such things. Geographical remoteness from the fields of work was one factor in this indifference, another may be sought in the prevailing Calvinism, which emphasised the sovereignty of God and disparaged man's part in carrying out His designs. But the main cause seems to have been the absence in the non-Roman bodies of any agency by which missions could be started and maintained.

The conversion of Europe was a simple task compared with that which confronts Western Europeans who wish to present the gospel to the peoples of Asia or Africa. In the main it was the work of individuals who proclaimed the new religion to people of the same stage of development, speaking the same or a kindred language. Europe outside the Roman

Empire presented difficulties which approximate to those experienced to-day, and, with some exceptions, of which Ireland is the most conspicuous, was not evangelised till centuries after the rest. But modern missionaries go to Africa and are confronted with child races whose language and modes of thought are intelligible only after many years of sympathetic study; or to Asia, where they find nations of a civilisation older than their own and powerfully entrenched religions. In the face of such difficulties the individual missionary is almost powerless, and must seek help from outside. Such help is provided to-day by the missionary society, but in the dawn of modern missions it was inevitable that the Church should rely on the State. Until experience had taught the defects of this method, none other was likely to occur to the mind. In the missions of the Portuguese in Goa and the Dutch in Ceylon we see striking examples of its superficial success and fundamental failure. Since, then, Church and State went hand in hand, and Spain and Portugal were great colonising powers, in West and East respectively, long before England, they naturally preceded her in missionary work.

The method now universally adopted of giving the necessary help to the missionary is the formation of a strong corporation or society which acts as a link between the main body of the Church at home and its representatives in the field, establishes a base equipped with funds and an ever-growing experience, and maintains a continuity of policy. In the Roman Church such societies were ready-made in the religious Orders. Until the non-Romans had found alternatives for these, little progress could be made.

The seventeenth century witnessed the beginning of English Colonial enterprise, and with it of missionary expansion. "The New England Company," founded in 1649 and reconstituted in 1662, was the first missionary society, though its aims and achievements were strictly limited. But the real beginning of the modern missionary era, so far as our land was concerned, was due to the interest taken by Dr. Bray in the "plantations" of America. The Bishop of London appointed him Commissary for Maryland in 1696, and he took his duties most seriously.

As we have already seen, his original intention was to make S.P.C.K. the agency by which the Church should carry out work overseas. On June 3, 1699, his scheme was laid before the three-months old Society. Occasional references occur in the minutes of the next two years to the raising of subscriptions for this branch of the work, but Dr. Bray left for America in December 1699, and his colleagues were evidently waiting for his return before taking any definite steps. On December 14, 1699, so we read, it was "Resolv'd that this Society will frequently peruse and consider the advices offer'd to this Society in the Book this day deliver'd them by Dr. Bray."

Dr. Bray returned in the summer of 1700, full of plans for the establishment of the Church in America. Much interest was aroused by his mission, and the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury appointed a Committee in March, 1701, to consult on the subject with the Bishop of London, under whose jurisdiction, it will be remembered, were all overseas possessions of the Crown. Immediately after this Dr. Bray submitted a petition to King William III., in which he speaks of the spiritual destitution of the Colonies, where he has lately been. He asks "that Your Majesty would be graciously pleased to issue Letters Patent to such Persons as Your Majesty shall think fit, thereby constituting them a Body Politick and Corporate, and to grant to them and their Successors, such Powers, Privileges, and Immunities as Your Majesty shall think meet and necessary for the Effecting of the aforesaid Ends and Designs."

The S.P.C.K. minutes now take up the story. The draft charter for S.P.G. was read on May 5, the petition to the King and other papers on May 12. On the 19th the charter was discussed up to a late hour in the evening, further consideration being delegated to a Committee of four who were to meet the following afternoon. The cost of the charter seems to have been defrayed out of money actually in hand and subscriptions in arrears, which were collected for this purpose. On June 23 the Royal Letters Patent were read, and a Committee was appointed to wait on the Archbishop, asking him to choose a time and place for the first meeting of the new Society. On the 30th it was reported that the first meeting had been held the previous Friday at Lambeth Palace, when

the Corporation had chosen its officers. In November it is stated that "the Society has thought fit to sink the subscriptions for the Plantations (to which all the members were obliged to subscribe on being admitted) by Reason that that Branch of their Designs is determined, His Majesty having been graciously pleased by Letters Patent under the Great Seal of England to Incorporate a Society for the Propagation of the Gospell in Foreign Parts, of which most of the Gentlemen of this Society are members." It was also agreed to omit any mention of the plantation work from the statement of the Society's designs sent to corresponding members.

The Committee of Convocation met several times, and were, so it seems, a little hurt at being superseded. Dr. Atterbury wrote subsequently: "When . . . that Committee, composed of very venerable and experienced men, well suited to such an enquiry, had sat several times in St. Paul's, and had made some progress in the business referred to them, a Charter was presently procured to place the consideration of that matter in other hands, where it now remains, and will, we hope, produce excellent results. But whatever they are, they must be acknowledged to have sprung from the overtures to that purpose first made by the Lower House of Convocation."

The attitude of Convocation must have encouraged Dr. Bray, but we cannot doubt that S.P.G. would have been founded in any case. He intended originally that the one Society *pro propaganda fide*, the S.P.C.K., should undertake the work of foreign missions, but his visit to America caused a change of plan. S.P.C.K. was a voluntary society, working with episcopal approval, but in no sense official, for the clause in Bray's draft scheme which provided for an application for a charter had not apparently been approved by his colleagues. Voluntaryism was inadequate for the needs of America, which required the prestige of a chartered society under royal patronage. Dr. Bray convinced his fellow-members, and together they undertook the necessary steps for the formation of S.P.G., including the provision of funds. The two Societies were at the outset, and have ever been, largely composed of the same men.

The above story is worth telling at some length because there is a general tendency to over-estimate the official

character of S.P.C.K. It was its unofficial character which necessitated the formation of S.P.G., which is in theory the Church of England organised for the purpose of foreign missions. S.P.C.K., on the contrary, is a society which happens to have strongly marked traditions of deference to the wishes of the episcopate, but theoretically it is a voluntary society with perfect freedom to shape its own policy and change its rules at will. The Annual Report for 1825, referring to the transference of S.P.C.K. Indian missions to S.P.G., expresses this concisely: "A Chartered Body . . . gives a pledge for continued good management, which no voluntary association can offer."

Here, with the removal of foreign missions from the statement of the Society's designs, this chapter might be expected to end, but a curious and interesting story remains to be told.

King Frederick IV. of Denmark was anxious to found a mission in India, and by the help of Professor Francke of Halle he secured two missionaries, Ziegenbalg and Plutschau, who sailed for India in 1705. They landed at the Danish settlement of Tranquebar, and, undismayed by their unfavourable reception at the hands of the residents, began to grapple with the difficulties of the situation. During the voyage they had acquired some knowledge of Portuguese, which was spoken in the neighbourhood by half-castes of Goan origin, and they now set themselves to learn Tamil. As soon as Ziegenbalg had attained some proficiency, he began to translate the New Testament into Tamil.

An English version of the letters written from India by these missionaries was published in 1709, and the S.P.G. was invited to help their work. But this society, being obliged by its charter to confine its operations to English Colonies, felt bound to refuse. The S.P.C.K. was now approached, and, deciding to help, appealed for subscriptions for this purpose. Books in Portuguese were prepared and a printing press was sent out.

The Society was naturally anxious that the work should be extended to the English settlements, and appealed to the East India Company, which issued an order in 1727 that the Danish missionaries were to be protected if they visited places under the Company's jurisdiction, provided their

behaviour was correct. The pioneer of the movement was Schultze, who left Tranquebar in 1726, and after a prospecting journey started a mission at Madras, which met with considerable success. The work at Cuddalore was an offshoot from Madras in 1737. By this time the S.P.C.K., though straitened for means, was almost entirely responsible for these missions.

Far the greatest of the missionaries was Schwartz, who landed at Tranquebar in 1750, and was chosen in 1766 to establish a new S.P.C.K. mission in Trichinopoly. Hence the work spread to Tanjore and Seringapatam. Schwartz lived on till 1798, and died with a great and deserved reputation. A mission to Calcutta had a chequered career. The only English missionary ever sent by S.P.C.K. to India, a Mr. Clark, arrived there in 1789, four years before Carey, who is often stated to have been the first English missionary.

The eighteenth century witnessed the great struggle between France and England for the possession of India, which was fought out largely in the district of the S.P.C.K. missions and sorely handicapped their work. Schwartz, however, was appointed Chaplain to the English troops, and made good use of his opportunities.

The mission work thus briefly sketched had obvious defects. The missionaries had no objection to the English Prayer Book, which they seem to have used generally, and relations between the Society and its workers in the field were most cordial, but the supervision of Lutheran clergy by an Anglican board at home was not a satisfactory expedient. Help from Germany and Denmark dwindled down almost to nothing as a cold rationalism came to prevail in those countries. Unfortunately, the missionaries took the line of least resistance in countenancing caste, though it must be remembered that later workers built on foundations laid by their predecessors and learned by their mistakes. Also their laudable desire to help their converts when in difficulty made them insufficiently apprehensive of the danger of making "rice-Christians."

But when all deductions have been made, these few devoted men accomplished much. Over 50,000 Tamils were baptised, though many subsequently relapsed, and thanks to the Society witness was borne for Christ in South India a full century before the great effort of the English Church began.

CHAPTER IV

CHARITY SCHOOLS

THE fable of a pious and learned boy-King in the sixteenth century busying himself, with the help of enlightened Protestant advisers, in founding schools will probably die hard. It has long ago been given up by scholars. Mr. Leach, whose researches were epoch-making, wrote: "As for poor Edward VI., meaning thereby the ruling councillors of his day, he cannot any longer be called the founder of our national system of elementary education. But he, or they, can at least claim the distinction of having had a unique opportunity of reorganising the whole educational system of a nation from top to bottom, without cost to the nation, and of having thrown it away." The sixteenth century was actually a period of decline in English education, when schools were suppressed rather than founded. Some were, of course, refounded, but the break-up of the medieval Church system meant the destruction of much beneficial educational activity organically connected with the Church.

In the fourteenth century, it has been said, educational facilities were actually greater in proportion to the population than at the beginning of the nineteenth. The old grammar schools provided the soil in which the New Learning flourished. The fifteenth century witnessed a decline in educational efficiency, to be attributed in the main to the campaign against the Lollards. So long as the nation had one faith, no one disputed the right and duty of the Church to care for the children. But the religious divisions of the sixteenth century, foreshadowed by the Lollard controversies, created an atmosphere of suspicion most harmful to education, for the State felt it

necessary to control the Church's activities without itself assuming responsibility.

Since Latin was the key to knowledge of every kind, medieval education consisted mainly in teaching Latin, and was therefore what we should call secondary. Schools for young children were "preparatory" rather than primary, though there were attempts at vernacular education—ABC schools and the like. But to teach a whole nation to read was neither possible nor desirable until books became cheap and plentiful. Not until the seventeenth century, with its multitude of books and pamphlets, was the way prepared for such an effort.

During the last quarter of the seventeenth century a start was made in the provision of primary education in France, Germany, and England, almost simultaneously. The motive in all three countries was religious. Good Christians were shocked at the moral degradation which followed the Wars of Religion, and resolved to do something to stem the tide of wickedness. In 1680 and the following years numbers of Charity schools were started in France by parish priests, and about that time special attention was being paid to the education of girls by the numerous religious Orders of women. The German movement was associated with the Pietists, and especially Francke of Halle; the English was due to S.P.C.K.

Several attempts had already been made. A Charity school was founded at Lambeth in 1661. Churchwardens' accounts show that some vestries provided education of a kind. Thomas Gouge, a minister ejected on St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662, went to Wales and started schools, from which, according to Strype, the S.P.C.K. schools originated. In his edition of Stow (1720) he describes the London Charity schools and says: "This favour of the Londoners towards poor children began divers years ago in North and South Wales." Interesting though these pioneer attempts are, they do not detract from the unique place in the annals of English education of the founders of S.P.C.K., who were the first to attack the problem with any definite plan or strong initiative.

Dr. Bray's original plan provided for the setting up of "Catechetical schools, for the education of poor children in reading and writing, and more especially in the principles of the Christian Religion." His colleague in this department of the

work was Colonel Colchester. At the first meeting of the Society it was resolved that Colchester and Bray should consider how best this object could be attained, and four days later, on March 12, Colchester was "desired to find out three persons to begin an endeavour of setting up schools in three parishes." He had practical experience, having started a school shortly before in his own parish of Westbury-on-Severn, where, in 1697, sixty-seven children were being educated at his expense. A number of schools, educating 2,000 children, were founded during the first few months of the Society's existence, and on November 16, 1699, the first letter to clerical correspondents in the country was approved. This enlarged on the wickedness of the age and described the method by which it was proposed to remedy it—namely, the religious education of the children of the poor. The new schools were to be "for the instruction of such poor children in Reading, Writing, and in the Catechism, whose Parents or Relations are not able to afford them the ordinary means of education." By 1704 there were fifty-four Charity schools in London and neighbourhood and thirty-four in the provinces, according to a list which has been preserved. The London list is probably complete, or nearly so, but the total of the provincial schools must have considerably exceeded thirty-four. The central Society seems never to have had much money at its disposal; its functions were in the main confined to moral suasion, exercised either through the personal exertions of its London members or through its correspondents. In the remote Welsh village of Glasbury, in Brecknockshire, according to a letter written by Humphrey Jorden in 1712, subscriptions were ill paid and most of the money came from the Society. But in a well-to-do neighbourhood like Eton influential residents were apparently expected to found schools themselves at the prompting of the Society. An interesting letter is preserved, written by Mr. John Chamberlayne, who had been Secretary of the Society from 1699-1702. Writing on May 21, 1717, he says: "I waited on the Provost of Eaton this morning on purpose to see whether anything more could be done about a Charity School in that place, than what has yet been attempted; and I can tell you with satisfaction that I found that Reverend Person well Dispos'd for the thing, but so deeply ingaged in

Public and Private works abt. the College (where he is now erecting the statue of the Founder K. H. Ye 6 in Brass, upon a marble Pedestal, and all at his own cost) that, this year at least, there is no Hopes of his complying with the wishes of the Society." An Oxford correspondent in the same year describes a conference between the University and City authorities which resulted in the University setting up a school for boys and the City two schools, one for boys and one for girls, the latter to be defrayed by a parish rate, "a moiety of one Tax for the Poor yearly." There was no need to assist such schools as these with money, but the Society was anxious to have as many as possible on its list, and there were other ways in which it could help. Model rules were drawn up for the guidance of the schools, a system of inspection was organised, and books were published from which the children could be taught to read at the same time as they were being instructed in religion. A curious specimen of educational publishing, not, of course, typical, is referred to in a letter of 1712. The writer has been instructed to compile some texts to be printed on a broad-sheet and hung on the wall warning the children against pride in view of "the great Evil of Pride and the Temptations to that dangerous and detestable Sin that are likely to fall on poor children enjoying the benefit of such happy Education as is provided for them in the Charity-schools." Truly the Committee were "not unmindful of their moral responsibilities."

The Society, like educational authorities in the twentieth century, deprecated excessive corporal punishment. A schoolmaster at Winchester named Dewell, writing in 1712, apologises abjectly for his severity in punishing a boy. "I shall not trouble you further," he says; "but only ask pardon of the Reverend and honourable Society." He adds: "I've been also told of calling ye same boy Imp, this I utterly disown; and abhor with the greatest detestation." So in various directions the Society was a kind of primitive Board of Education, though armed with moral powers only.

Turning to the actual schools, we must confess that their educational aims and achievements were but modest. The three R's as an ideal of English education came in with the Charity schools, which in their long existence hardly

got beyond this stage. The status of the teachers was wretchedly low. In a remote Welsh parish, Laugharne in Carmarthenshire, the master was paid £8 a year for teaching twenty boys. The pay was higher at Gravesend. We find the people of that town in 1717 deprecating the appointment of a married master, recommended to them by S.P.C.K., on the ground that they cannot pay more than £30, and he may have children which will become a charge on the parish. "It being indeed scarce possible for £30 a year to maintain him and his wife, for if they board it will near cost 'em the whole sum." In many places there was no schoolhouse, and all that could be done was to collect a few children in a cottage. William Waterson, of Winkfield in Berkshire, deserves to be remembered as a pioneer of new methods. On October 2, 1718, he writes that he is starting "four little schools, for nurseries to my own, where I shall have all the small children taught till they can be able to come to ye big school." At Bradford-on-Avon the school had to be fitted to the requirements of the nascent industrial system, with its exploitation of child labour, and was carried on during the breakfast and dinner hours—9 to 10 a.m. and 3 to 4 p.m. The employers paid five shillings yearly for each child, and allowed longer time for schooling when trade was slack. Child labour was probably the reason why the Bath correspondent of the Society, Henry Dixon, had to hold his school on Sunday evening.

The eighteenth century was proud of its Charity schools. The annual service for the Charity children of London, which was held in a parish church from 1704 to 1781 and afterwards at St. Paul's till 1877, roused great enthusiasm and stimulated public generosity. But as the century went on there was a falling-off in zeal and efficiency. "The more liberal conceptions of their early years," says Professor Adamson, "did not abide in the schools during the eighteenth century; like their German analogues, they became more and more merely Catechism schools." The Jacobite rising of 1715 struck a serious blow at the schools, which were suspected of being hotbeds of sedition, and public sympathy was accordingly alienated from the movement. Mr. Chamberlayne writes on August 21, 1716: "Especially at this critical Juncture when both masters and scholars so freely Pray, Drink and Swear also for a Popish

Pretender," great harm is being done to the Charity schools. He has written to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who has answered as follows: "Good Sir, I had yesterday the favour of yours on my Return to Westminster. I shal be very glad to do any service I can to the Charity-Schools, but pray look upon a letter inserted in the Flying Post of this Day, and see what Scandal the Knavery or Folly of some of the Masters gives." Actually some of the boys at Covent Garden School had worn green boughs on the previous 29th of May! But the Society is assured that they have been well whipped.

But in spite of the limitations of this eighteenth-century movement for primary education, something considerable was accomplished. A school of a sort was to be found in practically every parish. Mr. Montmorency, in his *State Intervention in English Education*, says that he has verified the picture of early eighteenth-century education given in Shenstone's poem "The Schoolmistress," which begins thus:

> "*In every village* marked with little spire,
> Embower'd in trees, and hardly known to fame,
> There dwells in lowly shed, and mean attire,
> A matron old, whom we Schoolmistress name,
> Who boasts unruly brats with birch to tame."

The education was definitely religious, based on the Bible and Catechism. Foundations were laid for the future, and a tradition of popular instruction begun. It is often said, and with truth, that the Wesleyan movement averted a French Revolution in England. But the soil for the Wesleyan and Evangelical revivals was prepared by the popular schools, which, if they did little more, at least provided great masses of people able to spell out their Bibles and hymn-books. In the present day enlightened and powerful public departments enforce education: two hundred years ago all was voluntary. As in the Middle Ages, it was Churchmen who provided the means by which children of the poor might learn. Their educational aims and results were lowly, judged by present standards, but we must not despise humble beginnings. In years to come others were to build an imposing fabric upon these foundations, but the men who laid them were the first members of S.P.C.K.

A passing reference should be made to the educational

work of the Society in Scotland, Ireland, and India, and its close association with Francke and the German educationalists. Out of many interesting records which illustrate these developments, I content myself with quoting one.

On Good Friday, 1717, the Charity children of Sligo, seventy-four in all, went in procession through the streets, singing psalms and repeating an address in front of the houses of their patrons. Part of the address runs as follows: "Honrd. Patrons, we the poor helpless Children of Xst. our Lord and Saviour, do pray to God constantly for yu and yrs. for yr. great Xstian Charity to us, without which we were in all appearance undone, lost and destroyed. . . . We begg you to consider that if any of us be drop'd for want of support, the whole School would be broken, and could not subsist for want of the due number. Neither can it subsist without punctual payment of ye blessed Charity. . . . When this World had enslav'd us to merciless Poverty and Want, we must, next to our being Xst's, own ourselves, in a human measure, with all humility, to be

"Your Ransomed Captives in the Lord
"The Poor Charity Boys."

CHAPTER V

THE TURNING-POINT

A HUNDRED years had passed since the founding of the Society, and it, like the Church which it served, was at a low ebb. That this is true of the Society cannot be denied, and it is unlikely that the general impression of Church life, derived from a multitude of sources, is far wrong. Dr. Wickham Legg has made a gallant attempt to rehabilitate the period in his *English Church Life from the Restoration to the Tractarian Movement*, with its motto *Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona*, which may be paraphrased, "Good Churchmanship did not begin with the Oxford Movement"; but all his researches only prove, what indeed, was worth proving, that there was a faithful remnant larger and more important than was generally suspected.

English life as a whole was far from dead. In the domain of literature the cold rationalism of the first half of the eighteenth century had given place to the Romantic movement, and the "Renascence of Wonder" had begun. Great stars like Wordsworth and Coleridge were already well above the horizon. The splendid qualities of the British race were seldom more conspicuously displayed than during the Napoleonic Wars. Mr. H. A. L. Fisher in memorable words has spoken of "that dauntless and dogged generation, who never cried craven and never drew breath." The poor—in town and country—were the victims of the mistakes of the Industrial Revolution and the enclosures, besides the inevitable hardships of war, but they endured like Stoics and their sons fought like lions.

In religious matters the nation was now awake after its early eighteenth-century sleep. The end of the century was a

time of great movements. The first British missionaries had begun their work in India, and Carey's fame was already widespread. The Religious Tract Society was founded in 1799 by the joint efforts of Churchmen and Nonconformists, and attained an immediate success. A new zeal for philanthropy prevailed, and the agitation had begun which was to lead eventually to the abolition of slavery.

It must be confessed that S.P.C.K. was one of the latest organisations to which a breath of new life came. When it did come, as we shall see presently, an era of rapid progress was inaugurated; but it was slow in coming, and meanwhile the work the Society might have done was assigned to others.

In the year 1800 the Society had 2,000 members. Its total income from all sources, including sales of books and dividends, was £10,179, of which £2,025 came from subscriptions and £332 from donations, these being almost entirely the admission fees of new members. On the expenditure side we find Indian missions costing exactly £1,000 and served by six missionaries. Nothing was spent on the Charity schools except a grant of £50 for the expenses of the annual service. Otherwise the Society confined its help to the provision of books, which reached the schools through members, who no doubt supported education in their own neighbourhood. But the interest of Churchpeople had evidently declined, since the number of Charity schools in England and Wales showed no increase on the 1,600 or so of 1741. Up to 1811, when the National Society was founded, there was bound up with the Annual Report a curious proposal addressed to Trustees of Charity Schools, which must be taken as representing the Society's policy. These are some extracts: "It is conceived, that if the Children educated in Charity Schools were employed in some such Businesses as they are now capable of, it would be no Hindrance to their Learning, and might have a very good Effect by inuring them early to Industry. . . . Suppose England and Wales to contain Ten Thousand Parishes, and that but Ten Persons in every Parish, one with another, were by some Method employed, who were perfectly idle before, then the whole Number of Persons set to work would be One Hundred Thousand, and, if they work but 300 Days in a Year, and one with another

earned but a Half Penny a Day, The Produce of their Labour at the Year's End would amount to 62,500 Pounds." The plan goes on to suggest that coarse wool, flax, or hemp should be spun in schools, and good people asked to send materials for the benefit of the schools. Children are to have what they earn. "That would make them diligent and induce all Christians to assist in an Undertaking, which so much conduces to the Glory of God, and the Good of Mankind."

It would be unfair to judge such a manifesto by modern standards, but I cannot but reflect how admirable such sentiments would have appeared to Mr. Gradgrind. Did the nursery rhyme about Jennie's pay for a day's work originate in some school where unusually generous trustees doubled the minimum rate?

The books on the Catalogue comprised a variety of Bibles, Prayer-Books, devotional works, tracts, and educational requisites such as Mrs. Trimmer's Readers. Section 9 was headed "Against Popery"; Section 10 "Enthusiasm," until 1816, when it was altered to "*Against* Enthusiasm." In 1813 the Bath Committee reported the need of literature to counteract what was sold by the hawkers, whose catalogue is thus described:

"1. Methodistical and enthusiastic Tracts.
"2. A low species of Tales and Novels, which from their titles and contents, seem calculated to minister to the sensual passions.
"3. Inflammatory Pamphlets on political subjects.
"4. Miscellaneous Books of unexceptionable tendency, which seem to have been purposely intermingled with the others."

The reference to political pamphlets helps us to understand the Society's attitude of mind at this period. Its loyalty to King and Constitution, always notable, was accentuated then, when the country was engaged in a life-and-death struggle with Napoleon, and from our own recent wartime experience we can judge it sympathetically if it was inclined to suspect misdirected "enthusiasm." According to the well-known story, Archbishop Manners Sutton told the first Bishop of Calcutta at his consecration in Lambeth Palace Chapel that his duty was to preach

the gospel and put down enthusiasm. The two things were quite consistent in the mind of the age.

But when all allowances have been made, it remains true that the Society missed great opportunities by failing to recognise the signs of the times. A new era had dawned in which heroism, the crusading spirit, even enthusiasm in the sense understood by the eighteenth century, were all needed in the service of the Kingdom.

Mr. Warre Cornish, in his *History of the English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, discussing this period, describes S.P.C.K. as "a Society which has never become slothful or conventional, though from its constitution it leans to the established order of things, and undertakes no crusades." But slothful and conventional is a fairly accurate description of the Society in 1800; there is nothing in its constitution to make it lean to the established order of things, and if Dr. Bray and his friends were not setting out on a crusade when they planned the lines on which the Society should work, the figurative use of the word is without meaning.

The Society was destined to be stung into activity by the founding of young and vigorous organisations, especially the Bible, Church Missionary, and National Societies, to each of which a brief notice must be given.

Too much has been made of Mary Jones, the little Welsh girl who walked thirty miles over the mountains to buy a Bible in her own tongue, and found none. S.P.C.K. had from time to time spent large sums of money on Welsh Bibles and Prayer Books. Between 1743 and 1799, 60,000 copies of the Bible were printed in Welsh. The last edition of 10,000 was printed in 1799, and sold at one-half the cost of the sheets. Former editions had involved the Society in a heavy debt, from which it took years to recover. The 1799 edition cost £1,139, and no doubt the Committee felt that they had met all reasonable demands and done enough for the present. But a policy of limited circulation of the Scriptures, however plausible, did not satisfy the new zeal of the time. The Bible Society was founded in 1804 "for promoting the most extensive circulation of the Holy Scriptures both at home and abroad." Its leaders had faith and initiative, and in ten years' time the income of the new Society, apart from sales,

had reached £70,000. Some supporters of S.P.C.K. felt a little sore at the intrusion. They held that Churchmen ought to support their own Bible Society, the S.P.C.K. One of them gave perhaps the aptest commentary on a now-forgotten controversy when he remarked in a pamphlet on the unostentatious character of S.P.C.K.: "So far has this forbearance gone that its very existence is unknown even to many of the Established Church." So the Society, having had the field to itself for a century, had confessedly not occupied it, even so far as the Church of England was concerned.

The C.M.S. was founded to evangelise Africa and such parts of the mission-field as were not assigned to S.P.G., which at that time worked in America only, and had but a tiny income, donations and subscriptions in 1800 amounting to £500 only. John Venn and others among the originators of C.M.S. subscribed both to S.P.G. and S.P.C.K. Josiah Pratt, its large-hearted Secretary, showed himself a valuable friend to S.P.G. by writing an account of its work. Now, S.P.C.K. was already in India, but even after a hundred years had still no English missionaries. Apart from this, it was too much to expect that Evangelicals should throw their strength into S.P.C.K. One Evangelical, according to Pratt's testimony, was refused admission to S.P.C.K. because he was recommended by Wilberforce, and somewhat later Charles Simeon was black-balled, and in the end only allowed to join thanks to the personal exertions of Blomfield, afterwards Bishop of London. By 1820 the income of C.M.S. had reached £30,000, whereas S.P.C.K. in the opening years of the century rarely spent more than £1,000 on its foreign missions.

By 1825 the S.P.G. was renewing its youth, and was prepared to accept new world-wide responsibilities. In that year the long connection of S.P.C.K. with South Indian missions ceased, the missions being handed over to S.P.G., S.P.C.K. making itself responsible for the maintenance of the missionaries during the remainder of their lives. Since then the activities of the Society abroad have been confined to making grants for work primarily connected with other societies, or else initiated and maintained by the local Church; it has not been responsible for missionaries of its own.

The third great Society whose foundation affected S.P.C.K.

was "The National Society for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church throughout England and Wales." Though not officially founded by S.P.C.K., it grew out of the older Society. A sermon preached by Dr. Marsh at the S.P.C.K. Anniversary on June 13, 1811, started a public discussion, and a meeting of members of S.P.C.K. at the Society's house on October 16, with the Archbishop in the chair, inaugurated the new Society. We learn from the Life of Joshua Watson that some wanted the work to be a branch of S.P.C.K., but the point does not seem to have been pressed.

Whether or not it was understood at the time, it is now clear that these years were the turning-point in the history of the Society. It is conceivable that with energetic and far-sighted leadership it might have become the greatest of all the Church's organisations. For a hundred years it had been a Society for home education, foreign missions, and the distribution of Bibles. But in the opening years of the nineteenth century new bodies were formed to do what had previously been considered the task of S.P.C.K., and in each case the money raised for the separate work in a few years far exceeded the entire income of S.P.C.K. in 1800 and the following years for all purposes. These developments must be ascribed to lethargy and lack of vision on the part of the Society rather than to self-abnegation. Yet, had it possessed the wisest leadership and the most courageous faith, it would probably not have been for the benefit of the Church if Dr. Bray's original design of one comprehensive Society *pro propaganda fide* had been realised in that time of change. Whatever may prove possible in the future to the Church of England acting as a corporate whole, or through one recognised agency, progress on those lines was certainly impossible then. "God fulfils Himself in many ways," and the forward movement of our Church in the nineteenth century has been achieved largely through the parallel advance of a number of societies, each with the driving power that comes from the possession of leaders and supporters with a single definite aim and like convictions.

But S.P.C.K. itself was destined to renew its youth, and a remarkable development was now at hand. For many

years it had been in effect a Church Co-operative Book Society, and now that the other branches of the work had ceased or been greatly lessened, this stood out as its special function. The National Society recognised this by its decision that no books save those of S.P.C.K. should be used in its schools. Since 1720 it had been the practice to supply members with books at the cost of the sheets, the Society paying for the binding; and with tracts or pamphlets at half cost price. There was no retail shop, but books ordered by members were sent by carrier. An early eighteenth-century letter throws a light on the difficulties of communication. The packet must reach the writer before the end of September, after which the roads will be impassable until the spring. But in 1810 a new and fruitful method was devised to secure a wider circulation of literature, the formation of District Committees. Joshua Watson, one of the so-called "Clapton sect," who became Treasurer in 1814, was the leading spirit in the Society at this period, and his Life contains many references to his love of and plans for S.P.C.K. He and his friends were reformers, and the older members declared that their plans would ruin the Society. But the new Committees worked a revolution. Their task was defined as being to "direct their attention to such objects within their several districts as occupy on a larger scale in London the deliberations of the General Board." Funds were raised locally and transmitted to London, and two-thirds of the sum received was credited to the District Committee in books. These were supplied at members' prices, which were far below those charged by the booksellers. Thus Bishop Andrewes' *Devotions* was charged to members at 1s. 3d., the published price being 3s., other books at $2\frac{1}{2}$d. (8d.), $\frac{1}{2}$ (2d.), etc.; and tracts at rates proportionately lower still. Some Committees even allowed the member or parish the full value in books of the sum raised, paying the remaining one-third out of district funds. In such cases the parish received in books about three times the amount of its contribution. No wonder the Treasurer's policy was deemed rash!

The results of the new departure were remarkable. There were 3,560 members in 1810, 14,530 in 1820, by which year the District Committees numbered 225. The receipts rose

to £60,000, of which approximately one-third represented subscriptions and donations. At this time there was no separation of trading account and charitable funds, all being one great charity. As may be imagined, the book-selling was carried on at a loss. But by its spirited policy the Society did a great service to the Church at a critical time. A wave of irreligion passing over the country in the troublous years after Waterloo, a special Committee was formed in 1819, styled the Anti-Infidel Committee, under whose auspices £7,326 was spent on producing a million books and tracts. A shop was opened in Fleet Street to dispose of these publications, which were given away or sold at a very low price; and Bath and other provincial centres followed suit and set up depots. This was the beginning of the depot system; hitherto sales had been practically confined to members.

As we shall see in the next chapter, some of these measures imposed unduly heavy burdens upon Headquarters, but to the authorities of the Society during this decade belongs the credit of having discerned the needs of the Church and supplied them with vigour and effectiveness.

CHAPTER VI

THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS

To condense the records of a hundred years into one chapter would be a difficult, if not impossible, task for the historian of any institution. That it should be even attempted here is a tribute to the varied interest of the subject, which demands such compression if the prescribed limits are to be observed. Some division of the period is necessary for the sake of clearness. The following, though somewhat arbitrary, will suit our present purpose.

I. 1820-1870.—The former date is the point at which we left off in Chapter V., when the effects of the forward movement fostered by Joshua Watson began to be manifest. The *terminus ad quem* is chosen because about that time important changes were made in the Society's internal arrangements, which have been only slightly modified since. The period was one of continued expansion in the publishing and bookselling department, and occasional large grants for work overseas. It closed with a severe financial crisis.

II. 1870-1898.—The Bicentenary and publishing of the History of the Society make a suitable end to this period, which was marked by several new and fruitful developments. Grants were still made for others to administer, but for the first time the Society undertook work, besides book-distribution and some minor activities, the control of which it retained.

III. 1898-1914.—The hopes of a largely increased income aroused by the Bicentenary were disappointed. For these sixteen years the Society's income was practically stationary, and the Committee did not feel justified in adding appreciably to their responsibilities.

IV. *Since* 1914.—For our Society, as for every other

European institution, a new chapter began in August, 1914, but as yet only the opening paragraphs of this can be written.

I.—1820-1870.

During the first half of the nineteenth century the Society expanded rapidly. The total income from all sources was £10,000 in 1800, £60,000 in 1820, £92,000 in 1840. The membership roll passed the 15,000 mark in 1822, but never rose much beyond this. In 1824 the offices were removed from Bartlett's Buildings in Holborn to Lincoln's Inn Fields, where presently a depot was established. The retail department prospered, its takings in 1854 amounting to over £23,000. The business was largely in Bibles, Prayer Books, and educational works, the last-named being fostered by the close connection between S.P.C.K. and the National Society. The original plan that S.P.C.K. should provide all books for National Schools proved impracticable, but the 1835 Report records that the Society "continues to supply all the religious books used in the National Schools," the managers being at liberty to choose what they liked for secular purposes. S.P.C.K., besides giving large grants from time to time to the National Society, when that Society established its depot at Westminster, went so far as to sacrifice its own large trade in educational requisites in order to give the new venture every chance. In 1836 the Society, which had hitherto arranged with authors for books and sold them, mainly to members, but had not published them, terminated its agreement with the firm of Rivington, and became its own publisher. £40,000 was spent in purchasing the stock and fitting a new depot.

During this period, in spite of many large grants to work abroad, the charitable activities of S.P.C.K. took the form mainly of distributing literature gratis or under cost price. In the twenty years from 1834 to 1854 some £200,000 was spent in meeting the loss on Bibles and Prayer Books sold at members' prices. Members in this connection meant, with few exceptions, the clergy buying for their poor parishioners. Then Dr. Bray's original design of parochial libraries was revived. The Anti-Infidel Committee of 1819, before its dissolution in 1825, organised this branch of the work, and

succeeded in establishing over 800 libraries. Substantial gifts of books were made to the Navy and Army, and the Society, which had provided literature for our men fighting under Marlborough and Nelson, found its opportunity again in the Crimean War. In 1830 an Army Order was issued that every soldier who could read should have a Bible and Prayer Book, and the Society's offer to provide for the want was accepted. Liabilities were increased in 1837 by the decision to supply workhouses, prisons, hospitals, and almshouses with Bibles and Prayer Books at 10 per cent. below cost price. In 1839 the practice was begun of presenting new churches and mission-rooms at home and abroad with sets of service books.

Having noted these activities, we are not surprised to find that the old bottles would not hold the new wine. In other words, drastic changes had to be made in the internal organisation of the Society. To meet the new conditions caused by the advance in education, and to make the gifts of books more widely acceptable, it seemed desirable to provide literature of a wholesome character on subjects not necessarily religious. So in 1832 a "Committee of General Literature and Education" was appointed with very wide powers. The Annual Report for 1832 states that "the operations of the Committee were to be entirely independent and distinct from those of the Society. The Society would not be understood to give anything more than its general sanction to the proposed objects as shown by a liberal grant in aid." The new Committee chose Mr. Parker as its publisher, and a Supplemental Catalogue was issued in which its books appeared marked with an asterisk among suitable works of other publishers. The main purpose of the Committee as originally conceived was the publication of a weekly magazine for the people. This appeared presently at the price of a penny under the title of *The Saturday Magazine*, and was a pioneer in this department of journalism. Its woodcuts were reproduced and many of its articles translated in a number of Continental countries, and an American edition was issued. But the Committee had more ambitious plans, and in its Report for 1833 spoke of publishing small religious books and sermons, besides historical, biographical, and scientific works. As this seemed going beyond

what was intended, a Tract Committee was formed in 1834, which, acting on behalf of the Standing Committee and assisted by a council of reference of five Bishops, was to recommend books and tracts to the General Meeting, where they were to be subject to the chances of a ballot. The Oxford Tracts were being published at the time and a theological storm raged throughout England, so it is not surprising that things did not go smoothly. The Society's records are a model of reticence, but in the Life of Cardinal Manning we have a reference to a dispute between the Evangelicals and High Church which was breaking up the S.P.C.K. "There has been," writes Manning, "a long course of deliberation in high places for setting up a new society for tracts only, and cutting off the balloting. . . . You know that after a tract has been affirmed by the Committee and by five or seven Bishops, I forget which, it is subjected to the wisdom of Mr. Rochford Clarke, W. W. Hall, etc., who may blackball it at a monthly meeting." He goes on to stigmatise the ballot as the negation of Church authority. The problem was solved by making the Tract Committee no longer a Committee of the Standing Committee, but independent, with power to publish books and tracts of a religious character, subject only to an appeal to the Episcopal Referees. This independent body published at first through Rivington, but the General Literature Committee, which had now received instructions to regard reward books for young people as one of its main objects, continued to employ Parker long after the publication of religious literature had been undertaken by S.P.C.K. directly. The present independence of the Literary Committees dates from a time when the Society published Bibles and Prayer Books itself, but delegated the provision of religious and general literature to two Committees of its members, each of which employed its own outside publisher.

Grants towards foreign missions during this period were on a liberal scale, the idea being to give substantial help to worthy objects. A grant of £5,000 in 1818 to Bishop's College, Calcutta, was followed by £6,000 voted to S.P.G. on the death of Bishop Middleton for scholarships at the College, £4,500 for Indian work on the death of Bishop Heber, and £6,000 for Indian schools in 1825. Any great emergency

called forth help. Thus, £10,000 was voted in 1834 to S.P.G. for the education of the newly emancipated West Indian negroes, £10,000 in 1840 to launch the Colonial Bishoprics Fund, and £10,000 for Indian schools after the Mutiny. A contribution of £5,000 was made in 1840 towards the building of Calcutta Cathedral. The descriptions of the beauty of the edifice and its suitability to India form rather pathetic reading. A romantic grant was made to Melbourne in 1851. The population had swollen greatly owing to the discovery of gold, but was far too excited by the prospect of nuggets to settle down to ordinary work. For a while, therefore, building was impossible. S.P.C.K. met the emergency by sending out an iron Church and parsonage at a cost of £1,300. In 1869 a grant of £2,000 for Church work in Natal caused an upheaval. The Colenso controversy was at its height, and the Society's action committed it to Bishop Gray's side. The smaller grants are too numerous to mention. Practically every new overseas bishopric and important educational institution applied for help, and not in vain. Thus, £4,000 was contributed to the division of the Diocese of Montreal, £2,000 to the building of St. Thomas's College, Colombo, and so on.

At home we note the Society subsidising the National Society generously, and doing other pieces of work which would otherwise have been left undone. From 1752 to 1840 S.P.C.K. provided spiritual ministrations to the Scilly Islands, which were regarded as extra-diocesan. When the connection ceased it endowed the Church on the islands with £4,000, besides pensioning for life the agents hitherto employed. In 1836, at Mr. Gladstone's suggestion, it began to grant books to emigrants, and a little later a modest beginning was made in providing Chaplains to minister to them. Then Ireland and Scotland, being outside the scope of other English societies, came to S.P.C.K., and received liberal help in books and grants towards churches and schools; the Irish grants were given largely through the Dublin Association for Promoting Christian Knowledge, a sister society.

A landmark in the Society's history was the appointment in 1834 of a Foreign Translation Committee, nominated directly by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The object had always been dear to S.P.C.K., and Bibles, Prayer Books, and other religious

books, had already been produced in the following languages: Arabic, Armenian, Danish, French, Malabar, Portuguese, Swedish, Tamil, Telegu, Urdu, besides the non-English languages of our islands—Gaelic, Irish, Manx, and Welsh. Dr. Pusey was one of the original members of the Committee, which had difficult problems to face. His name may be taken as a guarantee that the work was on sound Church lines. Then, what, some may ask, induced the Society to produce Prayer Books in Continental languages? It was partly to meet ascertained needs and partly to spread information about the Church of England. French Prayer Books were produced for the Channel Islands, Mauritius, the Seychelles, and Canada; German for the first generation of emigrants to our Colonies; Dutch for South African members of our Church; Portuguese for half-castes in India; Danish for seamen's churches in Hull and elsewhere where clergy ministered to sailors whose spiritual needs were otherwise neglected; Spanish for the second generation of our countrymen in Spanish America, who were forgetting their mother tongue. The Annual Report of 1851 says that "the new city of San Francisco" has bought large quantities of the Spanish Prayer Book. England's connection with Greece was close during this period. Our country was one of the three Powers responsible for the new State, and the temporary occupation of the Ionian Islands kept us in touch with it. The 1839 Report describes the Modern Greek version of our Prayer Book, which contained a note stating that it was published, "not with the intention of introducing the use of our own Liturgy into any Foreign Church, but solely for the purpose of making known to all what are the rites and ceremonies and doctrines of the Church of England." A curious controversy arose out of this book, the Society being denounced for using ἱερεύς to translate the various English words employed in the Prayer Book to denote the officiating minister. In 1840 the Society took the wise step of sending its Secretary, Mr. Tomlinson, afterwards first Bishop of Gibraltar, to the East to investigate the best way of helping the Eastern Churches. As a result of his visit, translations of the Prayer Book were published in Armenian and Turkish; a splendid edition of the New Testa-

ment in Coptic and Arabic was produced for use in the Coptic Churches, on seeing which, according to the Report of the Year, the Copts burst into tears; and the Septuagint in four volumes and some Homilies of St. Chrysostom were published at the wish of the Holy Synod of Athens, and distributed to the Greek clergy. Much good work was carried on in India, by grants administered through Diocesan Committees, and a beginning was made in the provision of books for African and American missions. An interesting experiment was the provision of bilingual Prayer Books, as well as tracts, for the foreigners who visited London for the 1851 Exhibition.

The period closed badly. The funds were so low that in 1867 £280 only was voted in money grants, and next year all applications were refused. A Committee of Inquiry was appointed, which disclosed the fact that, owing to the unsatisfactory conduct of an official, large sums of money were being wasted. The whole administration was overhauled, the charitable funds were separated from the publishing business, all expenditure was henceforth strictly supervised, and it was decided to appoint a Secretary for the publishing department. The Society owes a deep debt of gratitude to Mr. W. H. Smith (the well-known statesman), its Treasurer, and others who carried out this investigation and laid down methods of business which are still in the main followed.

II.—1870-1898.

The later periods can be treated more briefly, since their characteristic activities are still continued and will be described in later chapters. The reorganised publishing business soon recovered its prosperity. In 1870 a Secretary was appointed, whose task it was to be literary expert and adviser to the Publishing Committees. The choice fell on the Rev. J. M. Fuller, who justified his appointment and directed the publishing activities into new channels. After five busy years he was succeeded by the Rev. E. McClure, who gave forty years of faithful service to the Society. Large profits were made for a number of years to come, the highest paid over to the charitable funds in any one year being £8,000 in 1880. As businesses go nowadays, these are but modest profits, but bestowed in grants to struggling missions in heathen or newly-settled lands their

value is great. Many an anxious missionary must have blessed the S.P.C.K. for the timely help it was able to give owing to the capable administration of its business department. It must be remembered also that profits could easily have been larger if they had been regarded as the main purpose of the Society. But such success would never have been attained apart from the Committee's venture of faith, which secured an excellent freehold site in Northumberland Avenue on which to erect a shop, offices, and warehouse. These were completed in 1879, the total cost from first to last being nearly £100,000. The expenditure of so large a sum was made possible by a large legacy given at the end of the eighteenth century by Mr. Van Vryhouven, on the capital of which the Charity Commissioners allowed the Society to draw for this purpose. The hope that Northumberland Avenue would develop into a great shopping street was not realised, but the new position in the heart of London brought S.P.C.K. into a prominence that would have been impossible in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Public support did not increase perceptibly, subscriptions and donations, which had been £18,977 in 1870, amounting to £18,357 in 1897, though they improved considerably in the Bicentenary year ; but the profits from the publishing enabled large gifts to be made for special purposes over and above the continual stream of small grants. The Education Bill of 1870 strained the resources of the Church to the utmost, and S.P.C.K. contributed £25,000 between 1870 and 1892 in three large grants for the building and enlarging of elementary Church schools. Nearly all the Training Colleges received large sums of money. Between 1870 and 1874 we were responsible for their examination and inspection, a task which was both undertaken and relinquished at the request of the National Society. A system of Diocesan inspection was inaugurated with the help of S.P.C.K., which voted £3,000 to launch the scheme. A few only of the overseas grants can be mentioned. The new sees of Lahore, Rangoon, Lucknow, Chôta Nagpore, and Tinnevelly, received £5,000 each for their endowment. In 1884, £5,000 was voted for education in Tinnevelly, and the next year £7,760 was spent on Indian schools and colleges. The crisis caused by the withdrawal of State support in the

West Indies was mitigated by a grant of £5,000 to Jamaica in 1870 and a similar sum to Nassau in 1872. All the Dominions owe much to S.P.C.K. in the realm of higher education, but special mention may be made of the large grants to the Canadian foundations of Lennoxville; King's College, Windsor; Trinity College, Toronto; and St. John's College, Winnipeg. The Archbishop's Mission to the Assyrian Christians, from its inception to its tragic end in the war, was largely financed by S.P.C.K.

But, as stated above, the period was noteworthy for the planning of new work, the control of which remained in the Society's hands. St. Katherine's College at Tottenham was founded in 1878 for training schoolmistresses to teach in elementary schools, and has ever since been a cause of expense indeed, but far more of pride and gratification. The help given by the National Society, which contributed £2,000 to the building of the College, deserves acknowledgment. The spiritual care of emigrants was officially recognised as the special function of S.P.C.K. by Archbishop Tait's appeal to it in 1882 "to undertake the charge of this pressing matter on a larger scale": and in 1888 a Committee of the Lambeth Conference reported in terms of high praise on what had been achieved, and thus gave the sanction of the whole Anglican Episcopate to S.P.C.K. as the Church's agent for this work. The third important development was the opening of the Lay-workers' Training College at Stepney in 1889, to which students are admitted from all parts of the country. This was the Society's contribution towards the solving of the problems presented by East London and other aggregations of poverty, which were specially acute just then. A scheme of Lantern Lectures on Church History was started in 1886, and continued to do good work for many years.

III.—1898-1914.

During this period subscriptions showed a tendency to fall, but donations improved. The income from these two sources in the year before the war was £20,754. The improvement in donations coincided with a strenuous effort to make the Society better known. A special Committee of Inquiry in 1911 recommended the formation of a Home Organisation

Committee, which was forthwith appointed. In the autumn of 1910 the Archbishop of Canterbury appealed on the Society's behalf in the following terms :

"In my judgment the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge is amply justified in making wide appeal to Churchmen, and indeed to all Christians, for increased support.

"It is the oldest of our Church's Missionary Societies ; its work is world-wide, and is as varied as it is effective.

"Scores, perhaps hundreds, of fruitful endeavours have, at their birth, owed almost everything to the timely aid of S.P.C.K. . . ."

In the following year the Society was cheered by a letter from His Majesty the King, who sent £50 with this message : "His Majesty desired me to assure you of his very best wishes for the excellent objects of this ancient Society."

The usual grants were made for the world-wide purposes of the Society, but towards the end of the period on a more modest scale than heretofore. The Committee felt bound to adopt a prudent policy, since available resources had been depleted by certain large grants, notably £7,500 in 1906 for South African education, and £9,000 in 1907 for Church work in Western Canada, besides £4,000 towards the rebuilding of churches destroyed in the Jamaica earthquake. The publishing business was seriously interrupted in 1909 by a fire which destroyed nearly half the stock. In other ways the years immediately preceding the war were fraught with difficulty. Competition became very severe, as publishers vied with one another in lowering both the price of books and trade discounts, and the Society found it a hard matter to maintain its position.

IV.—Since 1914.

As was to be expected, the shock of war affected the finances at first, but fortunately the falling-off was not very serious. A great demand at once sprang up for books for the Navy and Army, and hardly a day passed without one or more grants being made.

In the spring of 1916 the war came very near to S.P.C.K., its buildings in Northumberland Avenue being commandeered for the Ministry of Munitions. The moving of a publisher's

warehouse at short notice would be a serious matter even in peace-time. Under war conditions, with the younger members of the staff away and the post-bag doubled by orders for literature connected with the National Mission, which was then in full swing, it seemed likely to prove disastrous. Enormous stocks of literature had to be sold as waste-paper because there was no room to store them in the substituted premises. As a result of the eviction, the Society was housed in four different parts of London. This naturally caused a loss of efficiency and a considerable increase in working expenses. The calling up of the more experienced members of the staff increased the strain almost to breaking-point, but, though there were some anxious moments, difficulties were overcome in the end. A claim was formulated for the refund of the amount by which the Society was out of pocket by the move, but the Defence of the Realm Royal Losses Commission awarded but a small proportion of the sum which the Government auditors had deemed reasonable. The losses had been sustained, but were apparently not such as could be legally repaid out of public funds. Besides the direct losses for which alone any claim can be made, indirect losses were considerable, as may be gathered from the fact that the publishing business showed a loss of over £16,000 during the three years ended March 31, 1918.

Our troubles were, however, not ended, for the excellent premises secured for shop and offices in the Haymarket were required by the War Office in the summer of 1918, and our wanderings began anew. But to complain about inconveniences with the world in agony would be unworthy; if our misfortunes have helped our country and the cause of the Allies ever so little, we are glad to have experienced them.

PART II

PRESENT

CHAPTER I

THE SOCIETY TO-DAY

SOME ardent Church defenders were appealing, with the help of posters, to the working-men of Portsmouth to rally round the Church of England on the ground that she had gained Magna Carta. "Rather a long time ago, wasn't it?" was the dry comment of Father Dolling, who was then at Landport.

This anecdote may serve as an introduction to the second part of my book. The call of the present is so insistent that an institution which appeals for public support must justify itself by pointing to what it is doing now. Too much dwelling upon the splendour of the designs of Dr. Bray or Robert Nelson, or even upon the nineteenth-century achievements of the Society, will probably defeat its purpose by provoking the reflection, "Rather a long time ago, wasn't it?" So, bearing in mind the severely practical purpose of my sketch, I have divided the subject into two equal halves, past and present, and given only so much past history as was necessary to make present policy intelligible. After the somewhat dry record of the Society's Constitution which occupies the bulk of this chapter, its various activities will be described, and then an attempt made to estimate the services it may be able, under God's providence, to render the Church in future years.

To belong to S.P.C.K., it is necessary to be a member of the Church of England or of some Church in communion with the Church of England, recommended by an existing member and elected at a General Meeting. An adverse vote of one-fifth of the members present is sufficient to prevent an election.

The General Meeting, held on the first Tuesday of each mouth except August and September, is the legislative body, making all money grants, electing Committees, Vice-Presidents, Treasurers, and Secretaries, and exercising various other powers. It may not vote money apart from the recommendations of the Standing Committee. Any member may give notice that he will propose a motion at the next meeting. The General Meeting, formerly called the Board, is the direct descendent of the original five members, and has power to alter or suspend rules at its discretion, provided the necessary notice has been given and at least twenty members are present. In accordance with Rule VIII., a Monthly Report containing the proceedings of the previous meeting is sent to all members, who thus receive the minutes of the Board Meeting which perhaps only a few have been able to attend. This Rule, however, was suspended in 1917, owing to the exigencies of war. As it happens, the General Meeting exercises its powers but rarely, being generally content to accept the recommendations of the Standing Committee. If it were not so, country members would probably complain that residents in or near London were given an unfair preponderance of weight in the affairs of the Society.

At the beginning of each year the Standing and Literary Committees are elected by the General Meeting. The outgoing Standing Committee nominates them, and they are elected *en bloc* if no other candidates are forthcoming. But it is always open to the meeting to propose other candidates, in which case a ballot is taken at the next meeting. Other Committees than the ones mentioned—those, for example, which manage the Emigration or Medical Missions work, and the Councils of the two Colleges—are Sub-Committees of the Standing Committee.

Here we note a peculiarity of the Society's Constitution, its dual character as a charitable society and a publishing firm. The Standing Committee has no direct voice in the policy of the publishing department, nor any check upon the literature issued by the most important of the publishing Committees, that for religious literature, though through its Finance Committee, which controls the Executive of the Society, it manages the business side of the publishing. As explained

in the last chapter, this arrangement has its roots in the past. The General Meeting retained its control of religious literature for some years after the formation of the General Literature Committee, and only relinquished it owing to the patent absurdity of allowing the careful work of the Tract Committee to be wrecked by a few malcontents who attended the General Meeting. Objections henceforward had to be lodged by three members actually present, and were then referred without discussion to the Episcopal Referees, a court of five diocesan Bishops appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose decision was final.

All Literary Committees have full power to publish within their terms of reference, subject only to the financial control of the Finance Committee. A few words may be said about each of them.

(i.) *Christian Evidence Committee.*—This is in a sense the oldest of the Literary Committees, since it represents the original *Anti-Infidel Committee* of 1819. The present Committee was constituted in 1870, its task being "to provide literature calculated to meet the various forms of current infidelity." Objections to its publications are dealt with in the same way as those brought against the publications of the Religious Literature Committee. The provinces of the two Committees are not very clearly distinguishable.

(ii.) *General Literature and Education Committee.*—As its name denotes, this Committee is largely concerned with books for the young and other works of an educational character. With the revolution in English education caused by the Act of 1902, its functions became less important. Elementary Church schools once drew their requisites largely from S.P.C.K., but since that date education authorities have made other arrangements for the supply of books, which have put books published by a Church society in a relatively unfavourable position. If objections are raised at a General Meeting to a publication of this Committee, the Standing Committee is the Court of Appeal; it also decides any question arising out of the words which define the Committee's function, which is to "provide Books and Tracts of a Christian tendency, but not being on subjects directly religious."

(iii.) *Religious Literature Committee.*—As explained above,

the Standing Committee has no voice in the publications of this Committee. The Episcopal Referees, appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, form the Court of Appeal, to whom also "all questions of doubt and difficulty arising in the Committee" are referred. It is only on very rare occasions that advantage is taken of this provision.

(iv.) *Foreign Translation Committee.*—This Committee is appointed directly by the Archbishop of Canterbury, under whose supervision it produces versions of the Bible and Prayer-Book. Before publishing translations of other English books, it must get the sanction of the Religious Literature Committee. The money put at its disposal must be administered "in conjunction with the Finance Committee."

(v.) *Church Year-Book Committee.*—A separate body to control a single publication might seem unnecessary. The explanation is, that the book, with the statistics it embodies, was the child of the late Canon Burnside of Hertingfordbury, and the Committee existed independently before becoming a Committee of S.P.C.K. The Finance Committee has to approve the outlay upon the publications of this and the following Committee, and the Standing Committee settles any disputed points.

(vi.) *Church Hymn-Book Committee.*—The constitution of this Committee is quite anomalous. It is appointed by the Standing Committee, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, not the Episcopal Referees, is the Court of Appeal.

(vii.) The superintendence of Bibles and Prayer Books is expressly reserved to the Standing Committee.

The reader may be pardoned if he thinks the rules rather a muddle. They are certainly illogical, having been framed at different times as need arose. In practice they work well enough. There is nothing sacrosanct about them, and they can be altered, after due notice, by twenty members at a General Meeting; but a revision of rules, to be of any use, would have to be thorough, and would mean the expenditure of time and energy that could with difficulty be spared at the present time.

The first Rule is of great importance: "The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge shall confine itself to the designs expressed in its name." The phraseology recalls an incident of the year 1701, which, indeed, seems to be the cause

of the Rule having this place of honour. On June 9 of that year the Society, asked to recommend a Swiss officer to the King, resolved "that this Society will always decline the Intermeddling with all matters which are Foreign to their Religious Designs," and on June 23 ordered that the resolution "be forthwith entered amongst the Standing Orders of this Society." If, negatively, the Rule forbids the Society offering its advice about commissions in the Guards, its present and positive significance is that the Society may do anything that seems calculated to further the cause of Christ's Kingdom.

The Archbishop of Canterbury is President of the Society, such Bishops as are members are ex-officio Vice-Presidents, with others elected to that position by the General Meeting; and there are four Treasurers, who are also Trustees, and form a corporate body under "The Charitable Trustees Incorporation Act, 1872."

The members of the Society, through their elected Committees, control its policy, but the carrying out of the Committees' instructions rests with the Secretaries. These are two in number: the Secretary for General Purposes and the Secretary of the Publishing Department. They are of equal status, and are jointly responsible for the public actions of the Society; but the General Secretary's name always stands first, irrespective of seniority. Under the General Secretary stand the Organising Secretaries and some clerks, while the Editorial Secretary is responsible for a large staff, about eighty in number, of clerks, travellers, shop-assistants, and warehousemen, who carry on the wholesale and retail business of the Publishing Department. The Accountant opens the letters of both departments and carries on the financial operations of the Society under the direction of the Treasurers and Secretaries.

The buildings in which the Society's work is conducted consist at the time of writing of the following:

1. Central Offices of both departments, 6, St. Martin's Place, Trafalgar Square, W.C. 2.
2. Warehouse and offices at 130, Wilton Road, S.W. 1, near Victoria Station, for the wholesale business.
3. A warehouse in Great Suffolk Street, Southwark, S.E., where the sheet stock is kept. Some still remains in the basement of Northumberland Avenue.

4. The main shop at 64, New Bond Street, W. 1.
5. Smaller shops at 143, Queen Victoria Street, E.C., in the City, and at Brighton.

S.P.C.K. depots in the country are of three kinds:

(*a*) Depots managed by the Local Committee, which also collects funds, and remits the balance, after payment of liabilities, to Headquarters. The maximum of local effort is stimulated by this method, but unless the shop is well managed there is a danger of part of the locally collected subscriptions going towards a deficit on the shop.

(*b*) Church bookshops going by the name of S.P.C.K. Depots, but managed by Committees of local Churchmen which represent other societies besides S.P.C.K.

(*c*) Ordinary shops recommended by the Local Committee as suitable to be recognised as depots. After the initial step has been taken and the appointment made, the Local Committee has little more to do, since the bookseller is inclined to resent anything that seems to him an interference with his business methods.

Since S.P.C.K. is often blamed for the real or imaginary defects of country depots, it is necessary to insist that the Society has no voice in their management, which rests, in varying degree, with the District Committee and the shopkeeper. This is still more true of overseas depots. Closer relations with these are desirable, but not easily arranged.

The annual income of the Society's General (or charitable) Fund from subscriptions, collections, and donations is generally in the neighbourhood of £20,000. Legacies are of a fluctuating amount. Dividends represent some £6,000 a year, and there are many Trust Funds, the most important of which are Canning's Fund, applied to the payment of passages of missionaries going to their work, and Clericus Fund, for the provision of books for His Majesty's Land Forces.

CHAPTER II

THE SOCIETY AT WORK AT HOME

HOME work may be considered under three heads: Educational, Literature, and Miscellaneous. The first two represent the original aims of S.P.C.K. after Foreign Missions had been relinquished to S.P.G.; the third includes a number of things undertaken at the request of the Church authorities, which no one else at the moment was willing to do.

I.

The largest single piece of S.P.C.K. work is St. Katharine's Training College for schoolmistresses at Tottenham, the importance of which can hardly be over-estimated. Church Training Colleges have had an anxious time lately, and their future is still uncertain. They are faced with the competition of great new institutions built with a lavish expenditure of public money. The attitude of the educational authorities has at times seemed unfriendly, but in spite of all difficulties our colleges hold their own. If, which God forbid, the Church of England could no longer maintain its present educational plant and had to sacrifice either the actual schools or the Training Colleges, there is no doubt what the decision ought to be. Much as we cherish the schools built and maintained at the cost of such sacrifices, a continued supply of teachers properly equipped for the religious side of their work is more important. The colleges are the key to the whole position. In these days the pressure of secular subjects is such that the teachers frequently reach the college stage with less religious knowledge than formerly. If they are to be filled with enthusiasm for the Church as the divinely appointed means of training the children for Christ, and with knowledge how to

apply the Church's system, it must be during their two years at college. Now, St. Katharine's is thoroughly efficient in its general teaching, and wins golden opinions from the visiting inspectors. But the chapel is its heart.

A recent report of H.M. Inspector "commented upon the pleasant bearing of the students and their frank and refined demeanour; the whole atmosphere of the place struck him, he said, as one of bright peace." No higher testimony could be desired. Such an atmosphere would every Christian wish to be that of his own life. I have purposely refrained from mentioning names of the Society's present friends and workers, but that of Prebendary Hobson, the only Principal the College has known in its forty years' existence, can hardly be omitted. The College is in the main what he has made it. Those who visit St. Katharine's are struck by the attractive combination of young life and high spirits with a certain σεμνότης. Churchpeople have been derided for attaching so much importance to "atmosphere," but they remain quite impenitent in their conviction that this is the supreme factor in education. The reputation of St. Katharine's ensures a steady stream of applicants for admission, from whom a selection has to be made. The College from first to last has cost S.P.C.K. over £70,000, and a grant of £12,000 was made in 1918 to build a hall, library, and extra class-rooms, as soon as circumstances permit. Changes are foreshadowed in the system of Church Training Colleges, but whatever happens S.P.C.K. will strain every nerve to maintain St. Katharine's in a state of efficiency and make a contribution to religious education worthy of its own history and ideals.

The Society uses several methods to encourage teachers to study religious subjects. Some thirty to forty scholarships of £10 each are awarded to pupil-teachers who are highest in the first class in the Archbishop's examination and subsequently enter Church Training Colleges, and a large number of small prizes are given to teachers who take a first class in the examinations conducted by the National Society. Classes are arranged with the help of S.P.C.K. for the religious instruction of students in the London County Council Colleges. The Society is the landlord of St. John's College, Battersea, which is managed by the National Society, having come to the

rescue in 1895 and secured the freehold of the College at a cost of £10,500; and it is still willing, so far as resources will allow, to give sympathetic consideration to appeals from other Training Colleges for assistance in enlarging and improving their buildings.

A peculiarly responsible and difficult work is that carried on by the Lay Workers' Training College at Stepney. This is practically a theological college for men who feel drawn to do Church work, but either lack a vocation or do not possess the necessary qualifications for the ordained ministry. The course lasts one year, and is open only to such as intend to give their whole time to religious work. The training is all too short, but the students are drawn from classes which cannot afford to spend a longer period without earning money. The fees are nominal, £15 a year, but even this is beyond the means of many. Some free studentships are offered by the kindness of friends, but more could be profitably used. The College can accommodate thirty, and has generally some twenty to twenty-five in residence, but has, of course, been emptied by the war. The Warden acts as an employment bureau for past as well as present students, and receives many applications for lay-readers. The difficulty is the unwillingness or incapacity of parishes to offer a living wage. Moreover, the status of the whole-time lay-worker is ill-defined; diocesan regulations vary, and misconceptions abound as to what a lay-reader may or may not do. Some of the students have eventually been ordained; others have become agents of such organisations as the Missions to Seamen or the Scripture Readers' Association; others, again, have taken up the work of the Police Court Mission. Since its foundation over 500 men have passed through the College, the great majority of whom have remained faithful to their original intention. The value of the College is being increasingly recognised; without it, some at least of the Church's sons, unable in their own Church to answer the call to give their lives to God's work, would be tempted to apply to some other religious body.

II.

Following a tradition over two centuries old, S.P.C.K. continues to distribute its literature gratis or under cost price, though not on the same scale as of old. Books are so cheap, or were before the war, and facilities for obtaining them so universal, that the need for free grants has diminished. Most of the money is expended in Bibles and Prayer Books, especially the latter, since we are the one Prayer Book Society. Children become familiar at an early age with the stoutly bound Prayer Books in good print with the S.P.C.K. emblem stamped on the front, though, alas! they show at times a depraved liking for miniature books with microscopic print. For eighty years the Society has presented new Churches abroad as well as at home with sets of books for the use of both clergy and congregation.

No applicants are more welcomed than naval and military Chaplains. During the war a steady stream of prayer and hymn books, devotional works, and general literature, has flowed from the Society's warehouse to camps at home, out to France and other theatres of the war, to prisoners of war in Germany, and to the ships. Merchant seamen are not forgotten, but they are reached mainly through the Missions to Seamen and St. Andrew's Waterside Church Mission, each of which receives a large annual grant of literature.

Then there is the humble but necessary tract. Its day is over, say some, but from the papers pushed through our letter-boxes we gather that other organisations, secular and religious, find the method still useful. Now, a tract is a small printed paper dealing with a religious subject. It is quite unmistakable, and attempts to disguise it will always fail. So S.P.C.K. boldly declares that it is still a Tract Society, and will continue to print and grant tracts so long as the clergy and their workers are willing to distribute them in the parishes. One class of tract is in great demand, little papers inculcating the observance of the Christian seasons. The following letter received in 1918 shows what can be done by their help:

"Let me say how helpful the tracts on the 'Last Things' were in my parish. They were pinned together (the Advent four) and sent to every household and to every communicant in each household, and the Christmas leaflet by itself, the week before

Christmas. It may be *post hoc* rather than *propter hoc*, but it is certainly worth noting that the number of Communions made both at —— and —— constituted a record as far back as I can trace, despite the absences due to war."

One other method of helping may be mentioned, the grant of libraries either at much reduced rates to theological students and newly ordained clergy at home, or quite free to missionaries going abroad for the first time. Workers trained overseas are included, and this South African deacon at least was properly grateful, as extracts from his letter will show :

"Sir, your humble servant does not know how to begin expressing his gratitude, for his great joy has almost overwhelmed his weak thinking powers. He feels unworthy for the precious gift with which you have favoured him. . . . Your humble servant regards this as one of the great miracles: for it has come so silently down upon him as dew from heaven upon the earth. . . . When we first came in contact with the whites, we thought they had come to destroy us ; but now we see that they had come to give us 'True Life.' We used to say they have no love, but we see that they have more, much more love, than the so-called love of ours. . . . Excuse your humble servant for being so verbose. . . . The books, being written by clever and God-fearing men, will show one proper channel through which to lead a good life."

III.

Passing by with a bare mention such activities as the financing of the Central Board of Missions during its early years, the grants towards the rent of Council schools and other places in parishes where no Church schools are available for Sunday schools, and the training of missionary students at Oxford and Cambridge by making it possible for them to stay up a fourth year, we come to three things which illustrate admirably the "maid-of-all-work" character of S.P.C.K.

The Society gives no help towards church building in England, since another society exists for that purpose, but there is nothing to prevent grants being made when unexpected emergencies arise in Scotland and Ireland. When a great munition area sprang up in a lonely part of Scotland, the

burden of providing churches for the Anglican population was more than the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway could be expected to bear unaided, and so S.P.C.K. gladly contributed £1,000 to this worthy object.

The collection of parochial statistics, undertaken at the request of the Convocations, is a peculiarly thankless task. The Secretary of S.P.C.K. pleading for his Society before a gathering of clergy would be well advised to say nothing about it, since few duties are more distasteful to the parish priest than the annual struggle with these forms. But they are an essential part of the Church's machinery. The publication of the totals in the Official Year Book is subsidiary to the main purpose of providing an accurate record for the use of Bishops, Archdeacons, Rural Deans, and, of late, bodies like the Diocesan Boards of Finance. Those who use the figures are invited to subscribe towards the cost, but a considerable sum remains to be found by the Society. The future will probably see some changes in the methods of work, but something of the kind will always be necessary.

The reader may very likely find the next object more congenial, the provision of Church literature for the blind, a task which the Society undertook in 1839, presently relinquished, and resumed in 1915. Other societies are caring for the blind on a large scale. All we wish to do is to occupy effectively our own little niche, feeling, as we do, that a Church publishing society probably knows best how to meet the needs of blind churchmen. The most considerable achievement is the production of the Prayer Book in a large number of pocket volumes. Thus the Psalms are published in thirty volumes, and the blind person going to Church can take with him the Psalms for the day. Some small books are also published, and a band of volunteers make books to order. An example of the kind of help given is seen in the recent producing of some English theological literature in Braille, which was sent to a blind Japanese clergyman.

CHAPTER III

THE SOCIETY AT WORK AFLOAT

DURING the war emigration practically ceased. British man-power—and woman-power too—has been so much needed at home as to justify the Motherland in refusing to part with her children. Apart from this, the Government was naturally reluctant to grant passports when the protection of civilian travellers meant a further burden upon the already overtaxed Navy. So the Society's work here described is that of the years just before the war.

At that time a stream of emigrants amounting to hundreds of thousands a year was flowing out from our islands, mainly to Canada and Australia. The majority were Churchmen, at least nominally, and it was the duty of the Church of England to follow them and minister to them in spiritual things. Let us see how our Church, through its appointed agency the S.P.C.K., grappled with the problem.

We begin with the English parish. The Society, having acquired all requisite information with help from overseas, embodies it in a little red book which is sent to every incumbent in England and Wales. The 1912 edition had a circulation of 50,000. The book contains, with much else, a list of the Society's Chaplains at the home ports and of those who are ready to welcome immigrants at the ports or inland distributing centres of the countries overseas. Here we meet with our first great difficulty, the unwillingness of the clergy to write commendatory letters for parishioners seeking a new home, whether in England or abroad. Some give a letter to the man himself, but this is not much good; he will frequently mislay it or be too shy to use it. What

is needed is that some representative of the Church should be in touch with him on the way and at the journey's end, so that eventually the parish priest of his new home may be enabled to welcome him into Church fellowship before the habit of worship formed in England is lost. Only seldom does the emigrant know his destination so definitely that it is possible to commend him directly to his new home. So the intermediate links forged by S.P.C.K. are necessary, and the book of information makes the clergyman's task easy. Even with the Society's help things are far from satisfactory, but without it they would be worse; the Bishop of Saskatchewan declared that commendations received from S.P.C.K. Chaplains were far more numerous than all that came from the home clergy.

Let us suppose a young man leaving home for Canada. The system at its best is illustrated by the following letter, which appeared in the *Spectator* a few years back:

"I heard lately that a lad was leaving our village here to try his luck in Canada. He had been recommended to go first to Ripley, Ontario, but he had no actual employment in view, had no letters of introduction, and knew not a single soul in the country. . . . I was told that the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge made arrangements to assist friendless emigrants, and immediately on hearing the facts of the case went to their office to see what I could do. This is the result: The lad was seen off at the London Docks; directly he landed at St. John, New Brunswick, he was met by the Society's emigration officer, who had a chat with him, supplied him with useful information, and gave him a letter of introduction to the Rector at Ripley. The lad has now got a job at a farm near Ripley, and has been recommended by the Rector of Ripley to the care of his employer and also the Rector of his parish. Thus, from the moment of his leaving his Surrey village to the time when he began work in an outlying parish in Ontario, this otherwise friendless and quite inexperienced lad has met with constant care and kindness."

This work might, of course, have been done by others, but as a matter of fact a Church lad was in touch throughout with priests of his Church. Our work is the *spiritual* care of

emigrants, but it is naturally interwoven with help in worldly matters.

Liverpool is the chief starting-place, and here the Society has two clergymen, who have been allowed by successive Rectors of St. Nicholas' Church to use the vestry as headquarters. There are also Chaplains at the Port of London, Southampton, Bristol and Avonmouth, Glasgow and Greenock, Belfast and Londonderry. Their work is to visit the ships, keeping a special lookout for those commended to them, and to form a base of operations for the Chaplains sailing on the ships that start from their ports. For voyage Chaplains the Society relies on clergy who happen to be travelling. A priest may be ready to take Sunday services as opportunity offers, but either from lack of experience of the classes from which emigrants are usually drawn, or because he is in need of a rest and holiday, may not want to undertake further responsibility. But the great majority are glad to help. The number of voyage Chaplains was 193 in 1913, 187 in 1914. About half the ships on which any considerable number of emigrants sail are furnished with Chaplains. The Committee has considered whether it should try to find permanent Chaplains who would devote a term of years to the work and spend most of their time on board ship, but so far the difficulties have been too great. A large staff would be needed and demands made on the Society's funds, to the detriment of other objects, which the amount of support received would not justify, and even then a great many ships would remain to be served by the present system.

The value of the work is most clearly seen on long voyages, and was impressed on the writer by a trip made to Australia years ago on a big White Star Liner. There was no distinction of class, and the passengers, a strangely assorted lot, naturally formed themselves into exclusive cliques. The Chaplain was a man of great energy and worked the ship like a compact, well-organised home parish. He soon became the life and soul of the ship, organising sports and concerts, getting the various cliques to work together, and from the secular side making the voyage thoroughly enjoyable. But he made full use of the spiritual opportunities. Besides Sunday and week-day services, there were Sunday-schools, choir practices, and

many a talk with men of a kind a parson at home seldom meets. People who never attend public worship are glad of the chance on a ship, if only to break the monotony. For the time they are impressionable; they are beginning a new and strange life, home associations mean much to them, and chords long silent respond to the old prayers and hymns.

The log-books of Chaplains form documents of great interest, as some quotations will show:

"I do think this sending a Priest on the boats, to work with the steerage people, is the most wonderful kind of mission work; it is perhaps the first really peaceful time some of them have ever had, and they are just going to a new country, where they can hope to begin again and live better lives, so that help like he gives them may mean all the world to them. I shall never forget that last Sunday night service."—(*Letter from a Lady Emigrant.*)

"The following is a brief summary [of my work]:

"Matins and Evensong, with address, 10 services. Holy Communion, 10 services. Afternoon, 5 services. Sunday-school (average 60 children), four Sundays. Talks on deck with groups, about 12. Private conversations in third-class, about 120. Funerals, 2.

"Tuesday 9th.—Sports—sack-race, cock-fight, tug-of-war, etc. Whist drive. A talk about greediness at cheese-time, 9 p.m. Some of the men used to grab all and leave none for others.

"I've suffered, I've learned much, but God used me, and the issues are His alone. . . . If ever I meet a man who has journeyed through for six weeks with 1,045 emigrants as a third-class steerage passenger, partaking of the same food, washing in the same lavatory, and living the same life as the other immigrants, I'll know how to sympathise with him, and honour him."

When the ship has once arrived the responsibility rests with the local Church, which makes its own arrangements for the care of those who should be its future members. But before the war, in view of the special needs of Canada, S.P.C.K. helped the Canadian Church by maintaining Chaplains at Quebec, Halifax, and St. John, N.B. This reception work is perhaps hardest of all. There are Government and other

agencies for helping immigrants in material things, which at such a time are apt to dwarf all else. The newly arrived have left the leisure of the voyage behind, and must bestir themselves for the hard work which lies ahead. The impressions gained on board ship have already begun to fade, and even regular church-goers in England do not always wish to be commended to the clergy of their new home. The clergy themselves have their own congregations to keep them busy, and sometimes lack the English tradition of responsibility for the parish. But the leaders of the Church in the Dominions are keenly alive to the importance of the work and constantly plead for its efficient performance.

Before we leave the subject, it should be mentioned that S.P.C.K. is in close touch with other bodies working in the same field, including those that care for women and girls. Emigration of English people to the United States is less important than formerly; work of a kindred nature to that of S.P.C.K. is carried on by the Episcopal Church Mission to Immigrants at New York.

When the war came, the S.P.C.K. emigration machine began to slow down, and at the time of writing has almost stopped. But the organisation is being kept intact. It would be a pity to sacrifice the position built up by so many years' work. The goodwill of the shipping companies alone is an asset of great value. The future of this work, as of much else, is uncertain. When ships are available for the purpose, it seems reasonable to anticipate a renewed flow of emigrants. Young Englishmen have formed the habit of moving about, having mixed freely with Canadians and Australians, and will probably wish to see the Dominions for themselves, even if they do not make their permanent homes there. To prophesy a period of restlessness is fairly safe. So the clergy who will travel are urged to communicate with S.P.C.K. The contribution they will get towards the cost of the passage is not a worthy consideration. The only sufficient motive for undertaking such responsible work is a love of souls, a desire on the part of those who work for Christ at home or abroad to work for Him and serve Him in His brethren also at sea. As years go on new problems will arise. There will be little opportunity for spiritual work on the air-liners of 1950, since the passengers

will hardly have recovered from air-sickness before they reach their destination. But ships are never likely to be superseded entirely, and S.P.C.K. hopes for generations yet to have the privilege of representing the Church of England afloat. May the Lord Who made so many voyages on the Sea of Galilee be with us and the Chaplains and the travellers whom we try to serve in His name.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOCIETY AT WORK ABROAD

SOME years ago Bishop Nevill of Dunedin described what S.P.C.K. had done for his diocese. Cut off in 1868 from the Diocese of Christchurch, it had to face an independent existence without any funds of its own. The first step was to raise a Bishopric Endowment Fund, £1,500 of which came from S.P.C.K. There were some self-supporting parishes, but no means of opening up new districts, so the Society gave £500 as the nucleus of a Clergy Sustentation Fund. A Divinity School followed, towards which we contributed £700, besides subsequent grants for individual students. The next project was a Bishop's house, to which object we gave £500. Then the Bishop spoke of the grants for churches. "The churches . . . are at first unpretentious buildings of wood, but for each of them it is usual to apply to S.P.C.K. for a grant, and, although the amount of such grants for country churches may be only perhaps £20 or £30, the expectation that such a grant may be made often makes all the difference as to whether the Churchpeople of a district will undertake the building of a church or not. I never apply for aid to the building of an ordinary church in a town; where the people can, they ought to provide for themselves; but for aid to struggling settlers I have never been refused, and I believe other Bishops in the Colonies could say the same."

Dunedin, like the other New Zealand dioceses, is now self-supporting and receives no help from S.P.C.K., with the possible exception of Theological Studentships, but its story is that of many another. The dioceses which now can stand alone were, a generation or so back, in the position of the present pioneer dioceses, and applied constantly for the help that was

seldom or never refused. For example, there is hardly a Bishop of our Communion overseas who does not owe part of his stipend to S.P.C.K.—American sees are, of course, excepted.

The Bishop of Dunedin mentioned the churches, so humble to begin with, which the settlers are encouraged to build by the knowledge that the last £30 to £50, or whatever the sum is, notoriously hard to raise, will be provided from England. At their fortnightly meetings the Standing Committee consider applications for help to build a church, college, or school—possibly an industrial establishment or a printing press. The letters are vividly interesting. A little African church is made of sods, which the Christians are collecting. But the roof must be of corrugated iron and be paid for by money, of which the congregation has little. Will S.P.C.K. put on the roof? A handful of settlers on the prairie or in the bush want a wooden church in which to worship God. At present they have to use the bar of an hotel. Will we help them? The applicants are evidently so much in earnest that the work would probably be done in the end without us, but to extend a helping hand is a privilege, and all supporters of S.P.C.K. wish at least part of their contributions to be used in this way. The churches of the homeland, with their wealth of historical associations and artistic beauty, are precious indeed in our eyes. But where a stately church now stands, originally there was, perhaps, a little building of wood, or even of wattle and daub, every whit as humble as the most primitive church to-day in the back-blocks of a new land. If without the Society's grant no church would be built at all, then we are providing a primary necessary of the religious life lived in accordance with the system of the Catholic Church; if the grant enables the church to be a little worthier than would otherwise be possible, then we are extending to others a tiny part of the privileges we have received from our fathers in the faith. In either case to be allowed to help is a privilege and joy. The grants are not always small, since the higher cost of a cathedral deserves a proportionately larger contribution. The provision of a dignified central church, where worship can be adequately offered, in a district where the other churches are at best only makeshift contrivances, is an object which the Committee consider deserving of liberal support.

The educational side of mission work, especially the training

of clergy and teachers, has always appealed to S.P.C.K., since it was founded for the two main objects of promoting education and missions. A number of dioceses are no longer helped by the Society, except in the training of their ordination candidates. Among colleges for teachers may be mentioned St. Peter's College, Grahamstown, and St. Matthew's, Keiskama Hoek, which receive liberal support. Normally, not more than one-half of the students at any institution are eligible for S.P.C.K. scholarships; without some such rule, the word "scholarship," which has come to denote some special merit or need, would lose its meaning. Ordinary mission schools also receive help, though, as these are a part of every mission, a strong case has naturally to be made out before the Society can add to its responsibilities by beginning a subsidy which often cannot be stopped without injury to the school. Industrial schools, too, are helped, as the following extracts from a letter written by Archdeacon Johnson of Rorke's Drift will show: "The British Commissioner stated that this northern part of Zululand was far in advance of the lower parts south and east in industry and civilisation. . . . I consider that whatever advancement out of barbarism has been made in this district of Zululand has been greatly due to our Industrial Establishment, which Establishment owes its very existence to your Society."

In 1885 the possibilities of medical missions were being increasingly recognised, and the Societies were looking out for trained workers to serve in their hospitals and dispensaries. But only rarely does a qualified doctor offer for work in the mission-field. The source of supply is those young men and women with no special qualifications at present who have felt a call to serve God among the heathen, and long to do so by Christ's method of relieving bodily sufferings. But the cost of training is often an insuperable obstacle. So S.P.C.K. stepped in and undertook the work of training those who should afterwards serve in the hospitals connected with the various missionary societies. Some 160 have been trained in all, at a cost of £38,000. Grants of as much as £150 a year are made to men, those to women being smaller. At the present time, about twenty are under training, including natives of India, China, and Corea. S.P.C.K. also supports hospitals

and dispensaries in various parts of the world, but the reader will be sufficiently familiar with the subject to make description of these unnecessary. The mission hospitals alleviate appreciably the sum of human misery. If this were all, the followers of Him "Who went about doing good" would consider the labour and expense well worth while. But experience has proved that there is no more effective way of preaching Christ, especially in Mahommedan lands, than the medical mission.

Two other outlets for the Society's gifts deserve to be mentioned. The first is the frequently recurring necessity of rebuilding Church property levelled to the ground by the hurricanes of the West Indies. The pluck with which these little communities face the periodical loss of their homes and possessions wins the respectful admiration of dwellers in more favoured climes, who should deem it a pleasure to help in the work of reconstruction. A grant of £750 made in 1918 towards the rebuilding of churches destroyed by a cyclone in North Queensland reminds us that other parts of the world suffer as disastrously, if not so often, as the West Indies. The other outlet for our charitable energies that remains to be mentioned is the establishment of mission presses. The S.P.C.K. Press at Madras dates from the Society's very early days, and is one of the most efficient Christian presses in India. But all over the world presses, small or great, are found which owe their origin and extension to S.P.C.K. If any mission seems to make small demands on the Society for literature, it will generally be found that our help has taken the form of the equipment of the press by which it is able to meet its needs from local resources.

Perhaps the chief value of the system of grants just described lies in the encouragement it gives to local effort. It is a great boon to a struggling mission to be sure of friends in England when it wants to go forward. The grants are large enough to be of real assistance, but not so large as to dry up the stream of local support. On our side it is much to be able to assure our brethren overseas that our hearts are with them, and that we claim the privilege of sharing their toils and triumphs. Apart from S.P.C.K. the average Churchman at home has at present no means of contributing his mite to the whole work of the Church of England overseas.

The Committee are, of course, guided by rules and principles in administering their funds. Before paying a building grant they insist that the church or school shall be properly insured and the site secured by the laws of the country for the use of the Church. They have adopted a system of classification according to the degree of self-support that the dioceses have, or should have, attained. This is revised from time to time, and affords a useful guide for deciding the scale on which grants shall be given. Needless to say, no party questions are ever raised at the Committee meetings. The Society is intensely loyal to Church order, and resolved to "do nothing without the Bishop." No grant is given except on the Bishop's application, but when the application is in order and in other respects seems deserving, no further questions are asked. A member's contribution may well be voted towards a mission conducted on lines of which he disapproves. This has caused searchings of heart, but a moment's reflection will convince the reader that no other course is possible. For a London Committee to dictate to Bishops is utterly subversive of Catholic principles, and has only to be stated to be repudiated. Other societies aim at being non-party, but none with such success as S.P.C.K., whom a missionary Bishop described at a recent annual meeting as the oldest daughter in the Church's household, who stopped quietly at home and helped the others and had never been seen *in a party dress.*

CHAPTER V

A CHURCH PUBLISHING HOUSE

MEMBERS of the Society will probably wish to hear something about the methods of the publishing department. These are the same as other publishers' methods, except in so far as the existence of Committees introduces an element of complication. Let us trace the course of a book from the arrival of the MS.

One of the MSS. which arrive daily and are glanced at by the Secretary seems to him to deserve a closer consideration. Some books have been commissioned; these stand in a different category, and provisional arrangements are at once made for their publication. But an unsolicited MS. which seems to possess some merit is sent to a member of the appropriate Committee, who acts as publisher's reader and makes his report at the next meeting. Sometimes he is in doubt, and asks for a second opinion from another member of the Committee, or it may be decided to employ an outsider for expert advice. If the first opinion is favourable, the author receives a letter asking him to allow his book to be put into type. He is informed that it has been provisionally accepted, but the final decision cannot be given until all the Committee have seen it in proof. His consent to the setting-up of the MS. is taken as recognising the editorial rights of the Committee, but of course no alterations are made without his consent.

The author raising no objection, the book is set up, and considered at a subsequent meeting by the Committee, who go carefully through the proofs and decide whether or no the book shall be published, frequently asking the author to make some alteration. When all outstanding questions have been settled, the work goes to press.

This system, which has been much criticised, would soon become unworkable if the Committee exercised their powers in an unreasonable way. An author feels something like this: "The book is mine and not the publisher's. I put my name to it, and if its general tendency is good, any publisher ought to be glad to publish without asking questions, provided the business aspect is satisfactory. The Committee, or some of their number, may not agree with all I say, but I have very likely given as many months to the study of the subject as they have given hours. In any case, to rule out whatever does not appeal to a Committee of widely different views robs my book of its individuality and tends to make it flat and dull."

But there is another side to the question. A good publisher is not a mere middleman, but rather a partner with the author, and his reputation is inevitably bound up with what he publishes. This is especially true of S.P.C.K., which is peculiarly identified in the public mind with its literature. The Society is justified in assuming that its authors, at any rate those who write on religious subjects, are good Christian men writing primarily for God's glory, and not so destitute of the grace of humility as to think their work incapable of improvement. The task of the Committee is to co-operate with the author in making his work as perfect as possible. Every scholar knows the predicament of wanting someone to read his book to save him from inevitable slips, but wondering from which of his busy friends he may dare to ask help. But the writer of an S.P.C.K. book, as a rule, has his proofs scanned by a number of critics, some of them well-known scholars, and is saved thereby from many a slip.

The position of the Committee is not easy. Theirs is the old problem of a just mean between "the two extremes, of too much stiffness in refusing, and of too much easiness" in passing anything. A reputation for arbitrary treatment of authors would result in none but young and inexperienced authors writing for the Society, whereas laxity would soon wreck it. S.P.C.K. desires to stand for orthodoxy in doctrine, courtesy in controversy, honesty and a sense of responsibility in scholarship, and its supporters would bitterly resent any declension from these ideals. In practice the difficulty is met by the Committee freely making suggestions for alterations

and improvements, which the author may accept or reject as he pleases. But where there is a really important point at issue, the Secretary feels he must insist on it, or else refer back to the Committee the author's reasons for not falling in with their suggestions. Only rarely is this necessary, and the Secretary's relations with authors are, with very rare exceptions, uniformly pleasant. The editorial functions of the Committee are not exercised in the case of official Church literature, and where an expert has been invited to write on his own subject they are reduced to a minimum.

Little need be said about the business operations. The Society belongs to the Publishers' Association, and abides loyally by the rules of that body. Having a retail business of its own, it is able to appreciate the bookseller's point of view. For the capital invested in his business and the knowledge necessary to meet his customers' needs a high-class bookseller gets a very small return. He is a benefactor to the reading public, who should not grudge him his modest remuneration.

A point on which supporters of S.P.C.K. may like some information is the relation of the charitable and trading sides of the Society. The impression which prevails in some quarters that the publishing department is subsidised by subscriptions is incorrect; with one small exception mentioned below, it is self-supporting. Not infrequently letters come from subscribers threatening to withdraw support because some book or tract has been published of which they disapprove. The answer is that the complainant's subscription does not go to the business department, but to the General Fund. Does he wish to weaken the missionary work of the Church because he disapproves of one or other of the thousands of the Society's publications? So far from the department being subsidised, it has in the past handed over very large sums to the General Fund as profits. At the present time it pays the actual rent and outgoings on the premises it occupies, besides interest on the nominal capital of £70,000 invested in the business.

There is, however, a qualification of what has just been said. The General Fund buys from the publishing business for the purpose of its grants a large number of books at trade prices. The sum spent on these grants in 1917-18 was £6,751. From this £1,561 should be deducted, represent-

ing the loss on cheap Bibles and Prayer Books sold under cost price, which is refunded to the publishing department, leaving £5,190, a small sum compared with the total turnover (£62,000 in 1914-15). Apart from Bibles and Prayer Books, the grants consist mainly of tracts, pamphlets, etc., and only to a small extent of actual books. Now, every publisher knows that tracts are unremunerative. The margin of profit is small and publicity is difficult. Without the help thus given by the General Fund, either the publication of tracts would have to cease or their price would have to be raised considerably. The charitable grants, then, are of small importance, and more than counterbalanced by considerations on the other side. Pressure hard to resist is constantly being put upon the Society to publish something for the sake of the Church which otherwise would not be published, except at the applicant's expense. Some report is prepared which the responsible authorities insist shall be issued at a price within the reach of all. Or the Society itself, realising that something will have to be bought mainly by the parochial clergy, purposely sells it as cheaply as possible. Some critics do not realise that, if the labourer is worthy of his hire, the publisher deserves proper remuneration, as do his staff of working men and women who have to live. Besides, there is a moral value in basing the cost of a product on the cost of production. Then, why, it may be asked, give way at all? Why ever fix the price too low? It is sometimes justifiable even on strict business principles. The goodwill of the Church is the greatest asset the Society can have, and it is better to incur a loss on certain things than to incur the suspicion, however unfounded, of "profiteering."

The business, then, is not directly subsidised by the charitable funds, and against the indirect help received from book grants must be set the number of unremunerative publications which the Society must undertake if it is to fulfil its purpose.

A word may be said here about members' privileges. Time was when the Society was practically a co-operative book club, the bulk of the subscriptions being returned to members in the form of literature sold much under cost price. At the time of writing there are no members' prices except for Bibles and Prayer Books, which are sold to members at a discount of

25 per cent. at all S.P.C.K. depots. The loss on the cheaper lines is made good by the charitable funds, the amount thus expended appearing in the outgoings of the General Fund in the yearly account. Now that the net-book system has become practically universal, no discounts to members on ordinary books are possible, unless some new arrangements should be made at the further cost of the charitable work of the Society, which is probably not the wish of the members as a whole. The recent abolition of the so-called members' privileges on ordinary books was inevitable, since the "net-book" system had become practically universal; as a matter of fact, the discount given to members had been for some time the same as that enjoyed by the general public in buying S.P.C.K. books at most shops.

So far this chapter has dealt with matters of domestic interest. Let us now consider the past publishing achievements of the Society and the possibilities of the future. Looking back on past history, and especially that of the last fifty years —for with the advent of Mr. J. M. Fuller in 1870 a spirited policy of all-round publishing was for the first time adopted— we see much useful work done, which nevertheless falls short of the excellence one would like. The Society has been an honest labourer in the field of literature, providing material for parish use, a number of good theological books and some of educational importance, but works of outstanding merit have been few. If we rule out some notable translations from the French, which S.P.C.K. is proud to have introduced to the English reader, in its long history it has issued perhaps one book worthy of a permanent place in the records of English Literature, Christina Rossetti's religious poems, and hardly any books which have had an influence on the theological thought of their time. Why should this be so? To a large extent it is due to the inevitable limitations of the Society's methods. In spite of the explanations of the Committee system given above, authors in the front rank, with publishers scrambling to secure anything they write, have eschewed a publisher who may possibly claim to alter what they have written. Then, as regards theology, Committees are bound to exercise a certain amount of caution, and new tendencies in theological thought, which ultimately influence the life of the

Church, are quite rightly scrutinised with considerable care on their first appearance. However, the present policy of the Committees is to interpret their function as allowing them to sanction considerable freedom in expressing opinion within the limits of what seems permissible in the Church of England.

Few publishers care to label themselves as restricted to any particular line of literature, for fear of losing good books. Similarly, the S.P.C.K. is very varied in the scope of its publishing. Still, its work falls naturally into a number of groups, which will be briefly described.

1. *Bibles and Prayer Books.*—The Society was originally to a large extent concerned with the distribution of these, and they still form an important part of its business. The Authorised Version and the Book of Common Prayer are a curious survival of the seventeenth-century system of monopolies, the sole right in England of printing them belonging to the King's printers and the University Presses of Oxford and Cambridge. That the profits on the publication of a Church Prayer Book should be confined by law to secular bodies is an obvious anachronism. The Universities were, of course, Church institutions when the license to print was conferred on them. The Church of England has no remedy when the printers agree to make small deviations from the Book Annexed. In the main these are natural accommodations to changed conditions, but one or two are matters of controversy. The privileged presses sell the Bible and Prayer Book in sheets with a special imprint to S.P.C.K. and other firms, who bind them in their own style. But the great majority of the books sold are published and distributed as well as printed by the three presses. It must be confessed that the monopoly has not been contrary to the public interest, and is justified by the high standard of accuracy and cheap prices maintained.

2. *Official Church Literature.*—Of late years S.P.C.K. has been closely associated with Forms of Prayer for Special Occasions, Reports of Committees, and the like. Some of these produce a modest profit, others entail considerable loss. The Society is always ready to do what is asked, in whatever business category the proposal falls. There is naturally some criticism of the arrangements, but it cannot but be recognised

as eminently appropriate that the profits, if any, on Church publishing should be devoted to Church purposes.

3. *Publishing for Other Bodies.*—A kindred activity to the last is the publishing of quasi-official literature, books, etc., for which some outside society makes itself responsible. The Society in these cases judges the status of the body for which it publishes and the general tendency of the literature rather than details. Only, where its own Committee is not directly responsible for the contents, it does not feel justified in incurring losses, against which it must ask to be guaranteed. Perhaps this branch of publishing might be extended in the future. We are confronted with an age of large businesses, and a small society with scanty resources cannot advertise sufficiently to make its books known outside the narrow circle of its own supporters. The widest possible co-operation and pooling of resources on the part of societies working with a common end would seem to be in the best interests of the Church.

4. *Theology.*—Though the English clergy are no longer *stupor mundi* in respect of learning, there is still a great tradition of scholarship in our Church, and an Anglican publishing society cannot be absolved from the duty of encouraging theological learning. The ideal would be for S.P.C.K. to stand in the same relation towards Anglican theology as the Oxford and Cambridge Presses stand towards learning generally. Financial considerations set a limit to what is possible in this direction; but, if the publishing business as a whole is even reasonably prosperous, one would hope that no book of real merit would be refused on the ground that it would not pay. It must, however, be remembered that books, however admirable, which cling tenaciously to the shelves of the publisher's warehouse, cannot be said to promote Christian Knowledge.

But, besides such books as appeal to the scholar, there is the task of translating the truths of the faith and the best contemporary theological thought about them into the language of ordinary men and women. This is a work which is never finished. Books written with such an aim have but a short life, since even after four or five years, so fast does the world move, quite a good book, if not already old-fashioned, has yet lost its bite. Some people complain of the multitude of books. But this is an age of books and reading and, as it takes all sorts

to make a world, according to the popular saying, so it takes all sorts of books to meet the needs of the Church.

5. *Tracts.*—There still remains the multitude of pamphlets, tracts, and Church requisites, which hardly deserve the name of literature, but are indispensable in parochial life. In proportion to their size, such publications take up much of the time of the Committee. From the business point of view they are unsatisfactory. Publicity is a difficulty, since one advertisement in the Church Press may well swallow up the entire profits of a penny pamphlet. They are "bad stock," and the bookseller avoids them. High-class publishers feel this, and as a rule confine themselves to proper books. But whatever progress S.P.C.K. might make in the direction of producing important books, it will never be absolved from the responsibility of being a Church Tract Society.

6. *General Literature.*—Finally, there is general literature, which is far more important than many of the Society's supporters realise. Indirectly it helps the religious books, since the Society becomes known in quarters which otherwise would hear nothing of it, and an opening is made for directly religious literature. The total volume of business is swollen, which makes it easier to meet the high cost of an establishment in the centre of London. But apart from this, the publishing of non-theological books is a standing protest against the labelling of the greater part of life as secular. Bishop Westcott's words represent the standpoint of the Society on the matter: "There was a time when it was usual to draw a sharp line between religious and worldly things. That time has happily gone by. We all at last acknowledge more or less that all life is one."

Another service which the Society can render is the provision of children's books. Busy adults are seldom able to read for themselves all the books which they put into the hands of their children or other people's children under their care. It is a relief to them to know that a responsible Committee of clergy and laity have examined the books and ruled out anything likely to be harmful. Or, again, it frequently happens that in a book, otherwise admirable, situations arise or expressions are used which are likely to prejudice the child against truths dear to Churchmen. In ordinary books it would not matter. Church-

manship cannot be a hot-house plant, and must be trained to live in the cold winds of an indifferent, perhaps hostile, world. But children as a rule have a naïve trust in what they find in books, and it is important that their reading should be supervised.

These are the main branches of S.P.C.K. publishing at the present time. Nothing prevents the Committees from launching out into new ventures, but the common sense and intelligible policy outlined above will probably be generally approved and will certainly demand all the energy and wisdom of the Committees for its successful accomplishment.

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I have described the publishing system of our Society. But what of its inner spirit, the motive underlying all the business details, which makes its friends and workers so loyal and enthusiastic? On November 3, 1879, addressing the Society on the occasion of the opening of the new buildings in Northumberland Avenue, Bishop Lightfoot spoke these memorable words, which Committeemen and officials alike would accept as the fittest expression of their ideals: "Be courageous, but be loving withal; be tender, be forbearing, be infinitely careful not to wound the religious conscience or the devout aspirations of any, even the least of Christ's little ones. . . . Adventure yourself, if you will, over the wide ocean of modern thought and life; but grasp firmly your chart and your compass. Hold fast the one cardinal truth of the Incarnation. . . . Hold fast this truth, and spare not. Launch out boldly, while this your guiding star shines boldly overhead. Be daunted by nothing, neither by new social problems nor by new scientific researches. There is a place for all, there is a function for all, in the domain of Christian Knowledge."

CHAPTER VI

IN OTHER TONGUES

If "do nothing without the Bishop" is the policy of S.P.C.K. as a whole, it applies with special force to the Foreign Translation Committee. A manuscript arrives, written in one out of a hundred or more languages. Only rarely can any member understand it; so they are obliged to trust the Bishop and his local Literature Committee. If the book professes to be a translation from the English, then, according to rule, the Religious Literature Committee must approve the teaching contained in the original. But this safeguard is not of much value, for a book thoroughly orthodox in English might easily become heretical in the course of its adaptation into, say, Japanese. Generally speaking, books intended for Asia are printed abroad and S.P.C.K. pays the bill, having first approved the estimate, and receives the proceeds, if any, less reasonable expenses of marketing; whereas books for Africa and the rest of the world are for the most part printed in England and sent out to the missions on similar conditions. It is more satisfactory, however, to fix a price, even if very low, that the users can be expected to pay, and sell the books; and, where such conveniences as book-shops exist, to utilise them.

This difference between Asia and the rest of the non-European world is due partly to the higher civilisation of the former, which has by now attained considerable proficiency in the art of printing, partly to the necessity of employing compositors familiar with the complicated Asiatic scripts.

The original purpose of the Foreign Translation Committee was to provide Bibles and Prayer Books. For some time, however, the tendency has been to leave Bibles to the

British and Foreign Bible Society. It would be impossible for S.P.C.K., even if it wished, to compete against that Society's great resources and accumulated experience, gained by over a hundred years' specialisation on this one object. Of the newer Bibles on the Catalogue, the Mota Bible (Melanesia) and the Chiswina New Testament (South Rhodesia) are in most demand. But the Bible Society, despite its great services to Church missions, cannot meet all their needs. In the first place, it will not print the Apocrypha. This is a serious impoverishment of the Bible. Few Christians to-day would consider the Book of Esther, for example, as valuable in its spiritual teaching as Wisdom or Ecclesiasticus. Moreover, apart from personal convictions, it is impossible to carry out the Church's system of daily services without the readings from the Apocrypha, which no Lectionary likely to be sanctioned by any province of our Church would altogether exclude. So one of the requests made to S.P.C.K. is to provide a slender volume of Lessons from the Apocrypha to supplement the Bibles of the B.F.B.S. Secondly, the purpose of the Bible Society is to present the Scriptures without note or comment. The first heathen convert to Christianity found it impossible to understand the Old Testament without explanation (Acts viii. 31), and even St. Peter spoke of St. Paul's Epistles as containing "some things hard to be understood," which the unlearned misapplied, "as also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pet. iii. 16). So it is to-day. The Bible Society provides the Church with the priceless gift of the Scriptures in a multitude of languages, but this gift cannot supersede the living voice of the Church, which interprets the Scriptures in Church and School, or through the medium of annotated editions. Our Church in India has begun to meet the need by the publication of the Indian Church Commentaries. These are written in English by competent scholars, keeping Indian readers in mind, as a basis for translations into the vernacular. The ordinary English commentary is not suitable for this purpose. To take one point only: it generally spends much time in explaining Oriental customs and modes of thought, which are self-evident to the Indian reader. As yet there are few, if any, Indian Christians of sufficient theological attainments to write independently good

original commentaries in the various vernaculars, but it is quite possible to find men to translate these specially written books. Good progress has already been made, and S.P.C.K. has undertaken to be responsible for the necessary outlay.

By far the most important work of the Committee for the present is the provision of Prayer Books. One imagines that a Church mission could dispense with the Bible more easily than a Prayer Book, if a choice between the two became necessary. The Prayer Book contains much of the Bible (in the Canticles and Psalms, Epistles and Gospels), the Creeds, and the forms for administering the Sacraments, and is a guide to worship without which the devotional needs of converts could not be satisfied.

Those who have not considered the subject may be surprised to learn how widespread is the influence of the English Prayer Book. Dr. Muss-Arnolt, an American scholar who has written the standard book on the subject, *The Book of Common Prayer among the Nations of the World* (S.P.C.K., 1914), reckoned that it had been translated into 146 languages. Some of these versions have been made in the United States from the American book, but for the great majority S.P.C.K. is responsible. It is not easy to give the exact number of S.P.C.K. versions. A mission may have received grants for the earlier editions of its Prayer Book, beside help towards the press which printed it, but for some time past have been responsible for producing its own books from local resources, which would include money derived from the sales of earlier editions. In such cases the Prayer Book, though no longer on S.P.C.K. Catalogue, should in fairness be added to the total. Others on the list should be deducted, since they are no longer used, and only a few specimen copies remain. After making such adjustments, we should not be far wrong if we gave eighty to ninety as the present number of versions. Some are asked for but rarely, and are, indeed, pathetic memorials of extinct or dormant missions. Others are in great demand. Thus, in 1917 the issue of Xosa (Kafir) Prayer Books was nearly 10,000, of Luganda 7,000.

The Committee exercise great care before sanctioning the issue of a new Prayer Book, or the revised version of an old one. The applicant must fill in an elaborate schedule giving full

particulars of all alterations, additions, and omissions. Words like "Catholic," "Person," "Substance," etc, it is suggested, should be transliterated from the Greek; such recommendations are based upon the rulings of successive Archbishops of Canterbury. Special attention must be paid to the form in which prayers for rulers, Christian or non-Christian, are couched; neglect in this matter may have important political consequences. Curious problems arise sometimes: Should "Catholic (Church)" be represented in German by "allgemeine" or "katholische?" Should "Sacraments" be rendered by the Arabic dual or plural? Should the ring be retained for Holy Matrimony?

In the early days of the Committee no doubts seem to have arisen respecting the propriety of the methods adopted. To make our "incomparable liturgy" as widely available as possible was universally acknowledged as worth the doing. To-day the pendulum has swung far in the opposite direction. That the Anglican Offices, at least, are unsuitable for English soldiers, and *a fortiori* for black or brown men, seems common ground to our critics. It is even suggested that S.P.C.K. is hindering the progress of missions by insisting on literal renderings of the English book, which must be unsuitable. This is a grave charge, and the position of the Society needs to be carefully defined.

As I have insisted several times, the Society is not official, but a voluntary association. It vigorously disclaims any suggestion of dictating to Bishops and other missionaries overseas. But when it receives a Prayer Book, which a Bishop asks may be published, before spending the money of its subscribers it demands to be assured that the Prayer Book is what it purports to be, the English book in a foreign dress. If appreciable changes have been made, then before deciding to publish, it appeals to its President, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and abides by his decision. The Foreign Translation Committee, it will be remembered, is nominated directly by the Archbishop. If, however, a missionary Bishop submits *A Prayer Book*, which he proposes to authorise for use in his diocese, there is nothing to prevent the Society's publishing it, though naturally there are limitations to the liberty that the Committee would feel disposed to claim. If, for instance, a new Communion Service were proposed, the

Committee would instinctively feel that such a development went far beyond the *ius liturgicum* of an individual Bishop, and would refuse to proceed without the approval of the Archbishop.

The fact is, S.P.C.K., by its careful and unobtrusive work in the production of Prayer Books, plays an important part in preventing scattered portions of the Anglican Communion from getting out of touch with the rest. Without this cautious policy, serious deviations from the present generally accepted use might arise, which would react on both the Home Church and all other Churches in communion, and cause a crisis.

But, apart from these considerations, *is* our Prayer Book useless in the mission-field? In some places it is translated literally to serve as a standard of worship, and the Bishop sanctions other forms for popular use. Elsewhere the actual book is used in large numbers. The sales of the Xosa book have already been mentioned; the Luganda and Ibo books are not far behind. These particular books are all paid for by those who use them, and cannot be represented as being forced upon unwilling Africans by an over-zealous home Society. The Bishop of Madagascar once had a remarkable experience. He visited the extreme north of the island, and found a community of Anglican Christians who owed their faith to a single catechist and the Malagasy Prayer Book.

"The real evangelistic power there, under God, has been the Prayer Book. I passed from one group of Christians to another, and found that, save for the lack of a valid ministry, they were undoubtedly members of the Church of England. I was confronted by a group of some fifteen pastors: some wearing their stoles as deacons, some as priests, whom neither I nor my predecessor had ordained. I examined carefully into what was done in Baptism, and Communion, and the Daily Worship, and I found that the one thing they were quite sure about was that the Prayer Book contained the right way of worshipping God. They have no idea of 'shortened forms,' except for daily services, nor . . . that some rubrics, such as that which orders the long exhortation in the Communion Service, have fallen into disuse, and I am bound to admit that I used this exhortation for the first time in

Madagascar, when I was visiting these Churches. The people know their part in the service extremely well, and join intelligently and reverently in the prayers. They sing the *Venite* and, strangely enough, the Apostles' Creed to Anglican Chants. The one point they were anxious to ascertain from me was, if they were doing their services *right*. In the large province of Nosibe, where three of these groups of Christians are to be found—each, I may remark, at a village which should prove an excellent centre for evangelisation—no English clergyman, no native priest or deacon trained by us, had ever been seen. Yet here were these people, with the traditions of twenty-five years ago, and their Prayer Books to guide them, holding Church of England services, just such as those we have in other parts of our Mission. The poor old Prayer Book is much spoken against by some people in these days; it should be recognised that it may prove, and in this case has proved, an evangelistic power."

If our missionaries had the fullest liberty to frame service-books as they pleased, in all probability they would not deviate far from the English model. The Book of Common Prayer has so entered into the marrow of our bones—its influence, too, among Wesleyans and other non-Anglicans is very great—that, while it may be modified and improved by the daughter Churches, it can hardly be superseded. In many places the native clergy, whose devotional life has been nourished on the Prayer Book, would resent radical changes. In South Africa, where white and black form one united Church, what would the African priests say if they were asked to accept a baby liturgy written down to their supposed level?

All the same, there must be changes ahead. When the Home Church has completed the task of Prayer Book revision, it can hardly expect the daughter Churches to accept as it stands a revision undertaken in order to adapt an old book to the requirements of twentieth-century England. The extent to which liberty of deviation was permissible would probably have to be decided by the Lambeth Conference. Perhaps the solution will be to prescribe one or more Uses for the administration of the Sacraments, to be followed with practical uniformity, but allow considerable latitude in other directions.

Let us now leave the region of high ecclesiastical policy and

turn to the ordinary translation work. The present intention of the Foreign Translation Committee is to make their title as far as possible a misnomer. They have circularised their overseas correspondents asking them to devote their energies no longer to literal translations of English works, but rather to original works, or else such free adaptations of English books to local needs as will make them cease to be translations in any real sense. One result of the circular deserves to be recorded. On the request of the Bishops of Madras and Tinnevelly, £50 was granted to the Bishop of Dornakal to provide him with the necessary equipment of books, etc., so that he might write some theological manuals for the clergy of Southern India. The first, a Tamil treatise on Confirmation, has already appeared, and has been translated into Telugu and Malayalam.

This chapter is already long, and there is space left only for a few notes on the different continents.

Europe.—The Society's Irish, Manx, and Gaelic literature is now merely a philological curiosity, but Welsh is still in use. Long after Welshmen have come to prefer reading English books, they continue to say their prayers in their mother-tongue, so that devotional literature is still needed. No Englishman could speak of Welsh as a foreign language, but for business purposes it is included in the operations of the Foreign Translation Fund. The practice is to publish what the responsible authorities of the Welsh Church ask for, and to fix the price by that of the corresponding book in English.

The work in Continental languages has been mentioned in an earlier chapter. A certain amount of literature was produced during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century, when it was thought that Reform movements would develop on lines similar to those of the English Reformation. Since then little has been done beyond providing some Dutch and Spanish books for our countrymen in South Africa and South America respectively.

America.—Three groups of languages are represented—the Eskimo, Cree, and other languages spoken in Canada; the Indian dialects of British Guiana; and those spoken by the Indians of Paraguay. Cree literature, mainly in syllabic script, is in considerable demand. The Eskimo Prayer and Hymn

Book is much appreciated; in 1915 the Society received a consignment of dolls and fishing-tackle made by the Eskimo women to show how they valued the book.

Africa.—Here the number of Languages increases yearly, and the S.P.C.K. is, to all intents and purposes, the publisher for the Missionary Societies of the Church of England. On the West Coast Ibo literature is most required; in South Africa, Chiswina, Sechuana, Sesuto, Xosa, and Zulu. The Society has recently produced a Xosa Hymn Book with tunes on a scale comparable with an English Hymn Book. A large percentage of the versions are the work of Xosas, and considerable use has been made of native melodies. But it is impossible to dispense with European music, and so many favourite English tunes are introduced. The Society, in order to be prepared for future emergencies, has, at the cost of a considerable outlay of money, procured leave to use all the tunes included in this book in any future hymn-books in non-European languages. From a musical point of view, therefore, the book may be regarded as a standard hymn-book for Anglican missions. The indices are very full, and should be most useful to future compilers.

In East Africa the two great languages are Swahili (in its Zanzibar and Mombasa varieties) and Luganda. The progress of the Luganda-speaking Church will be realised when it is stated that a recent order from Uganda included 1,000 copies of each of three Commentaries on the Gospels. Bishop Steere was a famous Swahili scholar in early days, and his books are still indispensable, not only for mission, but for Government purposes. During the war H.M. Government ordered large quantities of Steere's *Grammar* and *Exercises*, the circulation of which in 1917 exceeded 6,000. These books must have helped materially in the formation of the black army which fought so valiantly under its white officers in the East African campaign.

Asia.—S.P.C.K. has been in India so long that Diocesan Committees of S.P.C.K. are more firmly established there than elsewhere, and the Society's publishing activities are carried out mainly through them. The Bombay, Lahore, and Madras Committees are perhaps the most busy. In Urdu, the most widely spread language in India, the Lahore Committee has

published considerably over a hundred works, comprising original ones such as Dr. Imadud Din's "Doctrine of Muhammad," adapted translations such as Mrs. Charles' "Women of Christendom," and Bishop Gore's "Faith of a Christian," to say nothing of hymn-books and devotional works.

China and Japan have seemed to the Committee to require different treatment from other countries, and so a large block grant has been placed at the disposal of the Bishops in those countries. A considerable theological literature has already grown up in Japanese, including most of Dr. Illingworth's books. It is a special pleasure to witness the publication of original works of scholarship written by members of our Church in the Far East, such as Mr. Ochiai's Commentary on Amos and P'an Shen's book on the Nestorian Tablet.

A bare mention must suffice of our literary work in the Melanesian and New Guinea Missions. Poor as the Christians are, they are asked to pay for their books; the price of the Bugotu Catechism was lately fixed at "one porpoise-tooth."

The number of languages in which we publish may be said to be in the neighbourhood of 150, though, for reasons mentioned above, it is hard to give an exact figure. The work hitherto accomplished is scanty compared with the probable demands of the near future. On all sides it is being realised what an unfortunate situation arises when tens of thousands are spent on mission schools intended to give young people a Christian education, and next to nothing on books for them to read when they are educated. There is need for an S.P.C.K. in every mission—that is, a Christian publishing house ready to provide theological, devotional, and general reading for young and old alike. One trusts there will be real links between these societies of the future and the mother Society in London. We have much to offer. The resources of a large London publishing house in pictures and blocks alone are considerable. For example, if a child's Life of our Lord is being published at home, it is an easy matter to print 10,000 extra sets of the illustrations and hold them at the disposal of missions, to be bound up in Lives of our Lord that they will get written for their children.

In pursuing the work of vernacular literature, S.P.C.K. does

not forget the need of co-ordinating its efforts with those of other workers in the same field. The only limit to its contribution has been the inability of overtaxed missionaries to find time for writing and organising. Future demands on an income stationary or diminishing might curtail the ability to meet demands so freely, but for the present we want more work. No part of our many activities is so engrossing, so pregnant with possibilities for the future, so completely in harmony with the title and aims of the Society, as this promoting of the knowledge of Christ by literature in the Mission Field.

CHAPTER VII

LOOKING FORWARD

My task, which has been both pleasurable and interesting, is now completed. That the reading of this little book should prove as pleasurable as its writing would be too much to expect. But the reader will at least acknowledge the varied interest of the theme. The Society was founded with the double aim of promoting missions overseas and education at home. Within three years it retired from the field of missions in favour of the S.P.G., only to take up the work again presently in a new form. A century later it once more relinquished its missionary responsibilities to S.P.G., but two centuries from its foundation we find it still hard at work as a missionary Society on definite and useful lines of its own. That branch, though twice lopped off, has grown again. The same holds good of the educational branch of the Society's work.

Both in these and other fields of work the Society has time after time taken up some project of importance for the Church's welfare, because there was no one else to do it. Frequently, when the new scheme has justified its existence, S.P.C.K. has modestly withdrawn, handing it over to some other body or leaving it to stand alone now that it was strong enough. The Society has been justly called "The Church's Emergency Fund." It is kind of our friends to dub us "venerable," but the figure of a stately old lady fits the facts less well than that of an industrious maid-of-all-work, who remains unobtrusively in the background, but on whose energy and willingness depend to a large extent the happiness and smooth working of the Church household.

Yet it would be idle to deny that the recent record of the

Society is in some ways disappointing. Its income has been so scanty that the Committee has been obliged to adopt a cautious policy, since prudence has made any other impossible. In comparison with the splendid expansion of S.P.G. and C.M.S., S.P.C.K. has been stagnant. The income of the three Societies from subscriptions and donations in 1820 and 1917 respectively was as follows: S.P.G., £2,502 and £198,538; C.M.S., £29,797 and £347,480; S.P.C.K., £15,401 and £18,201. I choose 1820 because by then the full effects of the revival of S.P.G. and S.P.C.K. were manifest. Other societies, starting from nothing quite recently, have accomplished great things. Thus the Waifs and Strays has passed the £150,000 mark, the Church Army income is about a quarter of a million. Under modern conditions the usefulness of an organisation is so closely related to its income that one is bound to think largely in terms of money.

A historian of the Society, however modest his aim, must try to explain this comparative failure. The Society has a noble membership roll, basks in the sunshine of episcopal approval—no one could have been kinder than the present Archbishop of Canterbury, who but follows in the steps of his predecessors—and has earned the warmest approval of Churchmen overseas. Why, then, has it stood still, while its companions have been making such progress? The answer, it seems to me, is somewhat as follows:

1. Other societies have appealed for help on the ground that to be allowed to assist their work is a privilege in itself; S.P.C.K. in days gone by has obscured the appeal by talk about members' privileges and the offer of a *quid pro quo*. "Look what you get in return," has been the cry. Naturally, when changed conditions have made the privileges of little or no value, many have ceased to subscribe. If the Society's friends still use the old argument, it is against the wishes of the Committee, who prefer to base their appeal on the highest grounds.

2. Owing to the width of the Society's aims, which according to the first Rule are as wide as Christianity itself, there has been an expenditure of strength upon a variety of objects, each admirable in itself, but not in combination achieving a clearly defined result calculated to appeal to the Church public. Thus missionary-hearted Churchmen will subscribe to their favourite

missionary society, but not to S.P.C.K., which has no missionaries of its own and in the main acts as an auxiliary to other societies. Educationalists appreciate the Society's work for training colleges, but throw their energies into organisations which specialise upon education. And Churchmen generally are inclined to argue that, if their contributions are to be apportioned between a number of objects at home and abroad, they prefer to make the apportionment themselves.

3. S.P.C.K. resolutely stands for the whole Church of England, and refuses to be influenced by party considerations. It is sad to have to say so, but under existing conditions there is inevitably a lack of driving power behind an organisation which, some argue, does not know its own mind about the things that really matter. It may be plausibly maintained that in this respect the Society reflects the English Church, which in its turn reflects the English nation. Compromise and tolerance are innate in our race, and from this trait in our constitution we derive much of our strength as well as our weakness.

4. It is extraordinarily hard to make people understand the relations between the charitable and trading operations of the Society. Now that the trading side has become so important, it is apt to dwarf for some the missionary work, and the question arises: "Why should I subscribe to a business concern?" The profits which the publishing business earned in past years and handed over to the General Fund have probably cost the latter dear, by creating an impression that S.P.C.K. is a wealthy and flourishing concern which can look after itself.

5. Until quite recently, when a Home Organisation Committee was constituted and steps taken to make the Society better known, S.P.C.K. has been so little in the public eye that its claims have gone by default. Modern methods of publicity have been foreign to its character, as has also been a form of advertisement practised by some charities—namely, running into debt. The Committee has always tried to maintain a substantial balance, generally about a year's income, in order to be able to meet unexpected emergencies. This is sound finance, as understood by prudent City men, but the success of many charities is due to quite different methods. They run into debt, responding to the undoubted urgency of the need, and, adopting a policy of "faith," appeal for so many thousands to be raised

immediately, and the public cheerfully does what is wanted, to avoid the sad necessity of closing such and such a ward, school, or home.

6. S.P.C.K. has always been a London Society in a special sense. Originally London members administered it, country supporters being merely "corresponding members." The great forward movement of a century ago described on p. 42 coincided with a policy of decentralisation and the establishment of District Committees. An interesting illustration of the privileged position of London is afforded by a Rule, which was not altered till 1871, ordering that in the absence of the President or a bishop "the Archdeacon of *the Diocese*" should preside at meetings. The General Meeting is still the legislative body, though its old name of "The Board" is not now in use. Obviously this handicaps country members, who, apart from an expensive journey to London, cannot make their voice heard in the election of Committees and other possibly controversial matters. Generally speaking, interest in S.P.C.K. is strongest in London and the Home Counties, and diminishes in proportion to distance from London, except in the rare cases where the District Committee is still a living body with some work to do. The support from some of the big towns in the North is negligible.

But cannot some of these weaknessess be turned into sources of strength? In the changed world of the after-war era new work and opportunities for the Church will arise. The first impulse will be to form a new society, if a contemplated effort does not appear to fall within the province of any existing one. But there is a prejudice against the undue multiplication of societies, and, if the promoters of a scheme realised that an old and well-tried Society already existed within whose province, defined as the Promoting of Christian Knowledge, their project fell, they might well think it best to appeal to S.P.C.K. to undertake the work, pledging themselves to support both it and the Society's existing work to the best of their ability. It is probably Utopian to look for amalgamations of Church societies, though something of the kind was successfully accomplished at S.P.G., but at least one may hope that new ones will not be created without grave necessity.

Then, a platform as wide as the Church of England may prove attractive in the future, when, as we hope, the strife of parties has yielded to a better understanding. In this connection the central Church societies are most important. Fears are expressed of a disruption in the Church, but if unofficial voluntary societies, comprising men of all schools of thought and so microcosms of the Church, can hold together, then the Church of England will. Few better services, therefore, can be rendered to the Church of England at the present juncture than the strengthening of S.P.C.K. and similar bodies.

I am too closely connected with the publishing department to make it desirable to speak of possible future developments in this direction, but one question of great importance must be put here and left for the reader's consideration.

What is going to be the position of the central Church societies in the future? That of the missionary societies is clear enough. They will act as the accredited agents of a Church which more and more recognises its corporate responsibility for missions. But with the growing activity of the Houses of Convocation and the establishing and consolidation of representative Church assemblies, national and diocesan, which will work mainly by Standing Committees for different objects, what will be the *raison d'être* of a Society like S.P.C.K., so far as its home work is concerned? The powerful bodies of the future, into which the best clergy and laity will throw their strength, will, one imagines, be the National, Provincial, and Diocesan Synods, and the Central and Diocesan Boards of Missions and of Finance. Will not S.P.C.K., which aims at representing the whole Church, but has no weight of official authority behind it, find its opportunities of usefulness seriously limited?

This leads me to some final observations about the future position of the Society, apart from the publishing business.

1. There are two pieces of work belonging to S.P.C.K. in a special sense, which it will naturally wish to develop to the utmost—the spiritual care of emigrants and the provision of Prayer Books and other literature in foreign languages for the use of missions overseas. The first has been assigned to S.P.C.K. by Church authority, the second by the consent

of our missionaries, who have almost invariably come to the Society for whatever has been beyond their local resources.

2. The Society will continue to manage its institutions at home, such as the colleges at Tottenham and Stepney, as efficiently as possible, and to do the rest of its present work so long as the need remains. But as regards the meeting of the Church's future needs, the development of official Church bodies which will take over the routine of Church work will naturally affect the Society. Still, there will always be a place for voluntary societies within the Church. Their part will resemble that which we might expect to be played by private enterprise in a Socialist State. The State would manage industries, or at least all stable ones, but would allow freedom to private persons who thought they saw new demands arising and were willing to run all risks, to initiate new industries. But when the demand became certain, and the industry accordingly stable, the State would absorb the private enterprise, for which, according to the hypothesis, there would no longer be any justification. Apart from such liberty of experiment, a socialised State would stagnate. Similarly in the Church of the future: the special function of voluntary societies will be to foresee the future and act as pioneers, meeting the new needs with vigour and initiative, and ultimately retiring in favour of the official Church bodies, unless the Church should decide to recognise them as its accredited agents for certain departments of its work. Undue caution will not be expected of them; there will be quite enough of that in the Convocations and similar bodies. Indeed, conservatism and slowness of movement are both inevitable and appropriate when the whole Church has to be converted to reform. But the unofficial societies will hardly justify their existence unless they display vigour, foresight, and a readiness to seize opportunities.

3. There is no reason to anticipate changes in the Society's methods of helping the Church overseas, by which it does a great deal of good at a small cost. Let us suppose that another method were adopted—that one or two dioceses were singled out and supported with all possible liberality in the hope of making them model dioceses in equipment and otherwise. In thirty years' time the admirably equipped diocese would

probably be one of the most disappointing. We are beginning to see the limitations of what money can do in the mission-field, and to realise that the harm done by foreign subsidies may possibly outweigh the good. The S.P.C.K. method is surely the right one—a judicious apportionment of funds towards work the bulk of which is carried out by self-help, combined with really generous help to meet unexpected disasters. As the daughter Churches "feel their feet," the superintendence of the Mission Committee at home will become less necessary, possibly burdensome. Probably the time is not far distant when the S.P.C.K. method of helping will be the only one by which it is possible to assist monetarily a self-respecting diocese of a properly organised daughter Church.

But to realise our dreams for the future a far larger income will be needed, and so this brief sketch must end on a practical note. First of all we want more members. A guinea a year is a small sum to give, especially with the altered value of money; but it is much to receive, since the Society can count on a least the majority of its members remaining faithful. Then, Church collections and sermons about our work are always wanted. If you cannot spare us a Sunday, will you not give Ascension Day? If you are not much interested in some branches of our work, earmark your donation for the part that does appeal to you. If you are thinking of charities in your will, it is worth remembering that a Society which has 220 years of history will probably last a great many years more and outlive many modern institutions more in the public eye at present, and so may be safely trusted to administer a bequest which may not become available for some time.

We want to break the bad tradition which makes Church-people so ready to accept what we give, so loth to help us to give to others, the tendency well described once by Bishop John Selwyn: "Whenever there is any outside, ay, or any inside, work either to be done, the first thing people do is to go to the S.P.C.K., even in the ends of the earth, and ask them for aid, and the last thing they do is to send off money to help them to do the same for somebody else."

So, we need your help always, but especially now, when the war has inflicted on us heavy and irrecoverable losses. God

has not led us all this way through such strange vicissitudes without reserving for us something to do in the future for His Kingdom. We may be old, but we are not old-fashioned ; our heart is young. A vista of 220 years would confront us if we gazed into the past, but our eyes are not turned in that direction. We are looking rather into the future ; what it will be we know not, but of one thing we are sure, that " the best is yet to be."

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